



PHD

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An analysis of how nations behave in the wake of loss:
does it constitute grief?**

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The Grief of Nations
An Analysis of How Nations Behave in the Wake of Loss:
Does it Constitute Grief?

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Bath

Department of Social and Policy Sciences

July 2011

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The Grief of Nations

Abstract

This dissertation is concerned with the question of whether nations grieve, whether the behaviour they exhibit in the wake of loss can be said to constitute grief. Initially exploring the concepts of both grief and nation in order to establish the feasibility of national grief as a notion, it goes on to examine the applicability of grief theory, traditionally developed in the context of the individual suffering bereavement, to large-scale national collectives which have undergone significant shared loss.

The investigation is conducted with reference to two case studies: the Palestinian people in the aftermath of the loss of their land to the creation of Israel in the nakba of 1948; and Israel itself, as a manifestation of the European Jewish response to the holocaust and the centuries of loss and suffering which led up to it. In both cases, the relevant periods of history are scanned to see to what extent, if any, historical accounts reflect the contours and parameters of the grieving experience as the latter is described and defined in the grief theory literature. In addition, and serving to triangulate the evidence thus gleaned from national history, the contemporary visual arts of both nations, with their observation of and comment on the dominant features and issues of current national identity, are employed as data sources and explored with a view to ascertaining whether they reflect any themes expressive of or pertinent to collective historical loss and grief.

The findings from this research into national history and identity within a grief experience framework may serve to open up a new direction for the further development of grief theory. They may also, in revealing the insights afforded by a grief theory perspective on long-term interactions within the global community, offer some contribution to the study of international relations.

INTRODUCTION

“Scholarly research is often motivated by personal experiences”

(Sand 2009, p.1)

The motivation for this particular piece of research into national grief certainly fits into that category. It arose from personal experiences gained in the context of a career overseas in the field of international cultural relations. Not perhaps so inherently prone to either the power-games which can plague international relations per se, nor the inequality in relationships which can bedevil international development programmes, international cultural relations, at their most professional, involve the genuine attempt, from a position of respect and equality, to understand another way of life, to work out what makes another people tick.

Cultural relations are often used in the service of the political or economic agendas of international relations practitioners; they can equally be employed in the furtherance of international development strategies and the facilitation of development projects. At their worst and most naive, international cultural relations can amount to little more than tub-thumping a nation's opinions and showcasing their achievements. But at their best and most effective, they entail engagement and dialogue with another society to an extent that enhances the understanding of how that society functions; of its hopes and fears, its values and concerns; of what makes it proud and what gives it cause for shame and embarrassment; of what problems it has faced during the course of its history and how it has coped with those problems.

For well over three decades, I worked at this international coal face, arriving in a new country every three or four years, trying to get to grips with its society and culture so as to more easily and relevantly present our own, and thus embark on a meaningful interchange conducted in cultural terms. Arriving at an appreciation of another nation's way of life was my bread-and-butter, with the result that the acquisition of such an appreciation through everyday experiences and interactions became second nature over time, as

taken-for-granted as breathing. So much so that, whenever experience presented a challenge in terms of understanding, whenever some puzzling instances of collective conduct did not seem to easily fit into any previously acquired patterns, I could do nothing other than sit up and take notice.

The specific experiences which gave direction to this research date from my time in the Lebanon, six years in the nineties from shortly after the Taif Accord which brought the fifteen year multi-faceted civil war there to an end. But they did not concern the Lebanese themselves. During my time in Lebanon, I learned a great deal about the highly complex and sophisticated society in which I was living (or, rather, societies, plural, since every bend in the road seemed to lead to another distinct culture in this tiny nation of over a dozen different 'confessions', or religious groupings). I slowly got to grips with its complicated demography and equally convoluted history, and grew to love it as no other country I had ever worked in. While fully aware that one can never completely understand another nation, in the same way as one can never wholly comprehend another individual, I managed to peel away a few layers of obfuscation in Lebanon and gain some degree of understanding of what makes the Lebanese tick. But what really intrigued me, and what I could not so readily explain, was the behaviour of two other peoples that I did not have such easy access to: the Israeli neighbours, and the Palestinians living around Lebanon, for the most part in various refugee camps.

When I first arrived in Beirut, Israeli planes would fly over the city every day around lunchtime, breaking the sound barrier, presumably just to remind the inhabitants, if they needed any reminding, that Israel was there. After a few years, these regular daily forays were discontinued, and replaced by more irregular fly-overs, often at two or three in the morning, and frequently resulting in shattered windows in many parts of the city. These muscle-flexing, threatening gestures were accompanied by actions intended as reprisals for Hizbollah attack from the south of Lebanon, actions which from a Beirut-based perspective seemed way out of proportion to what in the mid-nineties amounted largely to the firing of old Katyusha rockets into the fields of northern Israel. The Israelis, for example, would send F16s up the coast on an almost annual basis to take out the main power station for Lebanon,

situated in the north of Beirut, and leave half the country in the dark, reliant on private and neighbourhood generators, for several weeks. Once, I remember, these planes even turned back, halfway home to Israel, so that they could take out the fire engines racing up the highway from central Beirut to put out the fires at the bombed power station.

I was there in 1996 when thousands of refugees streamed up the main road to Beirut from Sour and Saida (Tyre and Sidon) to escape Israeli attacks in the south. The infamous Qana massacre took place at this time, with the Israeli shelling of the UNIFIL Fiji Battalion base resulting in the deaths of many Lebanese civilians who had taken shelter there, along with the Fijian soldiers who had offered them refuge.

In 1998 I visited the south of Lebanon, liaising with the UN on an educational project there, and staying at the various UNIFIL battalion bases dotted around the area. For the first couple of days in what was at that time an Israeli occupied region, where the Lebanese required official permits to get in or out, our UN-plated vehicle was closely tracked by an Israeli unmanned drone, monitoring our every movement and meeting. Evening meals at the UNIFIL bases were sometimes interrupted by warning sirens, alerting everyone on the base to take shelter as Israeli F16s flew overhead on some bombing mission in the neighbourhood.

The contrast, at the double-fenced security border between Israel and Lebanon, was vivid: the white-walled, red-roofed Israeli houses, with their lush, green, well-tended lawns, on the other side of the fence, metres away from the dusty, stone-walled Lebanese villages on their dry pockets of land. At a couple of spots, huge holes had been gouged out of the Lebanese landscapes, reportedly as a result of attempts to divert the waters of Lebanon's Litani River on a course more advantageous to the Israelis.

I failed to understand the Israeli behaviour. Israel was a prosperous, technologically advanced country, with highly trained armed forces and state-of-the-art military equipment. Lebanon was still in a state of chaos, recently emerged from a fifteen year long war which had destroyed its infrastructure and scarred its people. The Lebanese army could not be taken seriously as a

professional fighting force, and the Lebanese people just wanted to get on and rebuild their lives after “the events” of the civil war. Lebanon at that time could offer no real threat to anyone. Hizbollah, not exactly under Lebanese control, were clearly determined to provide a source of irritation to Israel, but what was perceived as disproportionate Israeli retaliation for this irritation only succeeded in strengthening Hizbollah’s hand and garnering them more support amongst the Lebanese. In this context, I found Israel’s actions incomprehensible, and could almost understand why the Lebanese largely viewed them as cold, cruel, scheming monsters, an alien species that had taken up residence to their south and would give them no peace.

While the presence of the Israeli neighbours was evident from my first few hours in Beirut, that of the almost 400,000 Palestinians living amidst the Lebanese took me longer to discover. But as I got to know people better, I would find that a number of the professional, middle-class Lebanese I came across in the daily course of events were actually Palestinians, who had fled across the border in 1948, or, having seen the writing on the wall, decamped to Beirut en famille even earlier. In some cases, Arab Americans I met, dipping a toe back into Beirut to see if they could settle there again now that peace had broken out, turned out to be Palestinians who had sought refuge in Lebanon in 1948, then left in the seventies because of the civil war.

But the great majority were the less fortunate, less well-heeled Palestinians, living in the refugee camps, over twenty of them, mainly dotted up and down the coast, from Nahr-el-Bared beyond Tripoli in the north to Rashidieh near Sour in the south, with the largest concentrations of population in camps around Beirut and Saida. By the time I was living in Lebanon in the nineties, this population was well into its third generation since 1948, still refused Lebanese citizenship, still with little in the way of job prospects given an unemployment rate of around 70%, still mainly supported by UNRWA, and generally detested by the Lebanese, who regarded the Palestinians as largely responsible for their troubles during the civil war. A few of the second generation had managed to make a living as taxi drivers or street traders and thus gain a precarious foothold in mainstream Lebanese society. Some of the young third generation were seeking a way out of the whole situation through

education or marriage to a foreigner, while many were increasingly turning to fundamentalism and militancy, thus stirring up more trouble with their Lebanese hosts.

What struck me in my contacts with this Palestinian component of Lebanese society was its preoccupation with the past. There were the keys, for a start. In the luxury downtown flat of an American passport holder, in the comfortable villas of middle class university lecturers and business people, in the modest rooms of camp-dwellers in Bourj-el-Brajneh and Dbeyeh, I was shown, at some point of my visit, the key to the house that had been left behind in Palestine. This was, in each case, treated as a precious family heirloom, kept safe in some corner of the home, and unwrapped with a ritualistic solemnity on special occasions. It was passed down from generation to generation, though it was never clear to me at what point the owners had accepted, if indeed they ever had, that it would never be used to herald their entry to that particular Palestinian house again.

And then there were the plants. I came across an old lady in the camp at Ein-el-Helweh who told me that the plants growing round her door had come from her garden in Palestine, that her late husband had gone back over the border one night in 1948, in defiance of Israeli laws, and brought back cuttings with him. They had nurtured and tended those plants ever since, and had in turn, over time, presented cuttings from them to their relatives, friends and neighbours, so that now a great many people could boast of a little bit of Palestine growing around their houses. I have since read so many similar accounts from writers and researchers in the camps, coming across people cherishing bits of their former Palestinian gardens in Lebanese soil, that I must assume this is not an uncommon practice.

And, finally, there was the annual art competition in camp schools for nakba day, the winning entries in which would usually end up on the walls of UNRWA officials around the country. This competition, encouraging young children to imagine the catastrophe that befell their grandparents some forty years before they themselves were born, invariably elicited violent images of

bomb blasts and ruined buildings, of Israeli tanks pursuing fleeing Palestinian hordes, or crushing Palestinian corpses as they lay on the ground.

I never quite understood this enthrallment to the past. While sympathising with the old-timers' wish to hang on to their keys and their trees as reminders of the lives they had lost, I simply could not see why these were being transferred across generations, accompanied by what I could only perceive as morbid reflections on the past. Nor could I grasp why children at school were being asked to ponder and imagine events which had taken place over half a century before and could have little immediate relevance to their current situations. Perhaps I expected the Palestinians to behave more like the Lebanese, to dust themselves off and throw themselves into some sort of entrepreneurial assault on their futures, to be alert to present and future opportunities in education or business or both, and to take advantage of these for the betterment of themselves and their families.

Many years later, post-overseas career and, with a completely new direction, studying for a Masters in Sociology at the University of Bath, I stumbled across grief theory, in the context of bereaved individuals grieving the death of a loved one. I found this theory both powerful and fascinating as a perspective on loss and the reaction to it. It explained in retrospect two very difficult and uncharacteristic periods in my own life that had been occasioned by significant losses, one of a person, the other of a country, the one "overseas posting" out of a whole string that had really left its mark on me. I liked the way grief theory was linked, from the psychological angle, to a fundamental loss of self, the incurring of substantial damage to the self-identity and personal life-world. And I liked the way it was seen as subject, from the sociological angle, to the influences and pressures of a society keen to either keep the lid on the boiling pot of emotions that characterises grieving, or to exploit that same emotional force for its own ends. I particularly appreciated the way grief theory had shifted, over the course of the twentieth century, from an almost prescriptive preoccupation with the norms of "healthy" or "normal" grieving, to a far healthier, to my mind, recognition of the infinite variety of individual and cultural differences involved in what people grieve and how they grieve.

Grief theory, beneath the myriad manifestations of individual grieving, seemed to me to touch on a universal of the human condition: our difficulty in accepting the transience and impermanence of life and our tendency to cling to a perceived stability, ultimately illusory, in the face of the inevitable changes that transience entails. As soon as some significant and unwelcome change destroys our carefully crafted individual world and sense of who we are, we are knocked off our metaphorical feet for a bit, and then put all our energies into rebuilding that world with a new self-identity at the heart of it. Instead of going with the flow, we want to cling on to the river bank. Instead of risking the “slings and arrows of outrageous fortune”, we prefer to seek the refuge of castles literally built in the air.

Captivated by what I saw as the explanatory power of grief theory with reference to so much human behaviour, I began to muse on how it might apply at a collective level, and not just an individual one. I began to wonder if the Israeli behaviour I had judged as aggressive and disproportionate in Lebanon might be related to a collective adaptation to Jewish loss in the holocaust, and in the centuries of discrimination and persecution leading up to it; if the Palestinian intergenerational clinging to the past that I had witnessed in Lebanon, particularly in the camps, might not perhaps be attributable to a natural collective grief reaction to the loss of their lands in 1948. Could grief theory, traditionally developed in the context of bereaved individuals, usefully apply at a collective, national level? Could it provide a framework that might sophisticate and enlighten our perception of international relations? And, equally, might a study of how nations behave in the wake of collective loss in any way add to our understanding of individual grieving?

These questions have informed this research. The first chapter is an in-depth analysis of grief itself, within a theoretical framework that, by covering the personal and social aspects of the grieving phenomenon, caters for both psychological and sociological approaches. The second chapter examines the concept of collective grief in terms of the fundamentals of grieving as identified in chapter one. The study of grief as it affects various groups, such as the family, the work team, and the local community, is explored, but the

main focus is on the nation, with an emphasis on defining the national collective in such a way as to render the concept of national grief an entirely feasible notion.

In chapter three, the methods adopted for the research purposes are discussed, with an explanation of the rationale underlying the approach to the two case studies of national grief, namely, the Palestinians in the wake of the loss of their land to the creation of Israel in 1948; and Israel, as a manifestation of European Jewish grief in the aftermath of the holocaust and the centuries of loss and suffering that led up to it. The data to be used for these case studies derives from national histories covering the periods in question, and, in order to reinforce findings from the past with evidence in the present, from modern visual art works – largely photography, video and visual arts installations – produced by international standard Israeli and Palestinian artists.

Chapters four and five cover the relevant histories of the Palestinian people and of Israel respectively, approaching them through the lens of grief theory with a view to identifying any features and events which might correspond with the fundamental elements of the grieving experience. Chapter six investigates the major themes and trends in both the Israeli and Palestinian contemporary visual arts, examining to what extent these might be regarded as reflecting historical grief through their current social comment and observation. The final chapter draws conclusions from the foregoing research as to if and how grief theory might usefully apply at a national level, and as to whether this study of national grieving might also have some bearing on the theoretical parameters developed for individual grief.

1. THE NATURE OF GRIEF

“Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding”

(Khalil Gibran, The Prophet)

This initial chapter examines the concept of grief and explores the nature of the grieving phenomenon. It starts off by looking at definitions of grief, and at the associations the term carries in current everyday common usage. These associations can be seen to derive largely from academic constructions of grief when the development of grief theory over the past century, and its influence on both pragmatic attitudes towards and the practical management of grief, are considered. The main contributions of the various theoretical approaches to grief, from the personal angle, viewing grief as an interior process, as well as the social angle, emphasising the griever's social context and relationships, are reviewed in some detail.

Taking a holistic perspective which caters for the insights on grief afforded by both psychological and sociological approaches, an in-depth analysis of the grieving experience in terms of its fundamental elements is undertaken. These fundamentals would seem to boil down to four essential features: the significant and damaging loss which triggers the grieving; the emotional response to that loss; the attempt to make some sense of the post-loss situation, to create meaning from the void which the loss leaves in its wake; and, finally, the specific social context in which the griever finds himself, and the influence of that context on the shaping of the way in which the grief experience unfolds and of its ultimate consequences for both the griever and those around him.

The aim of this chapter is to arrive at an appropriate definition and comprehensive description of the grieving experience. Once the terms of the discourse surrounding the concept of grief are clearly established, the next chapter will go on to investigate how they might meaningfully be used to predicate the concept of a large group collective such as nation.

Defining Grief

The terms “grief” and “grieving” have been in common usage for several centuries. The Oxford English Dictionary (www.oed.com), the recognised authority on the evolution of the English language over the last millennium, records instances of their use in the sense of suffering or distress, both mental and physical, from as early as the mid-fourteenth century. Although the preponderance of recorded uses refers to mental or emotional suffering, the field of reference within that sphere is wide, encompassing a continuum from sorrow and sadness to vexation and annoyance:

1350 – So glad was he then, that no grief under god gained to his joy. (Will. Palerne 2473)

1413 – How may my eyes restrain them for to show by weeping my heart’s grief. (Pilgr. Sowle iv.xx.66)

1568 – Grief, as saith Cicero, is a disease which vexeth the mind. (P. Martyr’s Comm. Rom. Lx.237b)

1632 – Before my arrival in Aleppo, the Caravan was from thence departed, which bred no small grief in my heart. (Lithgow, Trav. V. 198)

From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, usage begins to narrow down, and the term is increasingly recorded in the context of the death of a family member or close associate. By the twenty first century, this collocation with death and bereavement, along with a location of the distress involved at the more extreme suffering end of its historic continuum of reference, characterise the accepted definition of grief:

Oxford Dictionary of English – intense sorrow, esp. caused by someone’s death (www.oxfordreference.com)

Merriam-Webster Dictionary – deep and poignant distress caused by or as if by bereavement (www.merriam-webster.com).

The internet, regardless of the various pros and cons over its use for research purposes, provides a readily accessible database for up-to-date language usage, and entering “grief” into any reputable web-search engine (e.g. Google, Yahoo) throws up strong support for the dictionary definition in the first few pages of results, as well as referencing further aspects which serve to flesh out the overall concept. Thus grief variously “describes the feelings, thoughts and behaviour gone through after bereavement” (www.netdoctor.co.uk), involves “the loss of a loved one” (www.healthyplace.com), entails “coping with bereavement” (www.bbc.co.uk/health), and is “a multi-faceted response to loss” (www.lifepaths.org). Some entries widen the loss reference from death alone to “death, divorce, pet loss and moving” (www.good-grief.org), or to loss of job, of health, of financial stability or even of “a cherished dream” (www.helpguide.org).

The grief engendered by such loss is clearly no trivial matter. It is described as “difficult” and “challenging”, and requires “coping” and “dealing with”; the efforts involved form part of a “process” or “cycle” with set “stages” (www.crusebereavementcare.org; www.facingbereavement.co.uk; www.terminalillness.co.uk). A variety of negative emotions, such as anger, guilt, sadness, anxiety and despair would appear to accompany grieving, and physical symptoms like stomach pains and insomnia can be part of the experience too (www.hospicenet.org; www.crusebereavementcare.org). Grief is evidently a medical issue, with references to websites such as “netdoctor.com”, “yourtotalhealth.ivillage.com”, “BUPA health fact sheets” (www.bupa.co.uk), and “channel4.com/health” or “bbc.co.uk/health”. Like an illness or a disease, grief has to be “got over” or “removed”. In order to achieve this “recovery”, “help” and “support” are necessary, expert professional support at that, in the form of “grief counsellors” (www.netdoctor.co.uk; www.facingbereavement.co.uk), a “grief recovery handbook” (www.grief-recovery.com), the “Grief Journal” (www.griefjournal.com), and the advice proffered on websites like “myproblemsgone.com”. There are hints that grief, like death and taxes, is unavoidable, in statements like “the grieving process is one of the most difficult and challenging certainties in life” (www.grief-and-bereavement.com), and in the Grief Journal’s promise “to help you with the loss in your life”.

The contemporary concept of grief that confronts us from these definitions and associations is a highly complex bundle of semantic components, involving loss, suffering, undesirability, effort, recovery and support, all with the overtones of universality and inevitability. And an examination of the development of grief theory, with its attendant academic constructions of grief, over the past century, can reveal how this concept has been arrived at. While many excellent overviews trace this development in some detail (Becker and Rothaupt 2007; Howarth 2006; Silverman and Klass 1996, pp. 3-27; Small 2001; Valentine 2006), this chapter will concentrate on reviewing the major defining contributions to grief theory covered by these studies, with a view to exploring how they have fashioned the current concept of grief and the understanding of what grief is and how it operates.

Approaching Grief

The Personal Angle

It is perhaps not surprising that in the twentieth century, the era of modernity, with its unrelenting focus on the individual, the grief phenomenon should be largely viewed from a personal angle, as a private and interior process. As such, its study fell squarely within the field of psychology, and all accounts of the development of grief theory begin with Freud's *Mourning and Melancholia* (1917/1961). This work was originally intended as an examination of the difference between grief ('mourning', in Freud's original terms), involving a recognition of absence and loss, and depression (Freud's 'melancholia'), entailing an attachment to the void left by that loss (Leader 2008). It was set within the context of oedipal love attachment, not of bereavement (Silverman and Klass 1996). But Freud's description of the grieving process as a goal-directed activity aimed at disengaging and severing ties, at managing sorrow and restoring inner equilibrium, along with his distinction between "normal" and pathological grieving, caught the professional imagination, and came to dominate subsequent thinking in the grief and bereavement field.

Archer (1999) argues that A.F. Shand's "laws of sorrow" (1914) would have provided a sounder basis for the development of grief theory in that his work better anticipated many of the conclusions achieved by subsequent research into grief, particularly with regard to different types of grief reaction, to the importance of social support during grieving, and to the continued tie to the deceased. But Freud's psychoanalytical framework fit the time and the place, and served as the basis of "grief work" research and practice for much of the ensuing century. Within the field of psychoanalysis, the work of Abraham (1924), Deutsch (1937) and Klein (1940), all built on Freud's foundations, with their themes of cutting ties in order to move on in the context of bereavement, of the need to disengage from the projective identification of the deceased, and of the potential for psychiatric illness if these goals of grieving remain unmet.

The metaphor of illness is much in evidence throughout the development of grief theory. Lindemann's (1944) work was the first real piece of empirical research into grief, based on interviews with various samples of bereaved people, and his study resulted in the elaboration of a symptomology of grief. Engel (1961) portrayed grief as a disease, maintaining a medical focus on its diagnosis and treatment. Marris (1958), Hobson (1964) and Gorer (1965) studied grief responses and reactions, both psychological and physical, among community samples in Britain, mainly widows, and added another dimension to their clinically based accounts by taking account of the social context of the bereaved. The severity of grief symptoms was measured along psychometric scales such as The Texas Inventory of Grief (Faschingbauer et al. 1977) or the Grief Experience Inventory (Sanders et al. 1985), devised to assess the needs of the bereaved on their path to recovery.

A distinction between "healthy" and "unhealthy" grieving was central to Bowlby's (1969, 1973, 1980) biologically-based attachment theory of grief and bereavement, developed by analogy with separation anxiety in the context of the mother-child relationship. "Healthy" grieving, in his view, could be traced back to childhood experiences of sympathetic attitudes towards attachment behaviour, while "unhealthy" grieving derived from childhood experience of impatience with such behaviour and perceptions of it as

something to be quickly outgrown. His observations of young children's reactions to separation led him to propose three "phases" of grief: protest, despair and detachment (1961). In later work with Parkes (1970), an initial phase of numbness and disbelief was added. Parkes further developed this phase-model of grief in his early work (1970, 1972), identifying the main stages as:

- numbness and disbelief, punctuated by distress or anger
- yearning and pining, accompanied by anxiety
- depression and despair, along with hopelessness and apathy
- recovery and reorganization

He also recognised the occurrence of other emotional states such as guilt, self-reproach, aggression, and preoccupation with thoughts of the deceased, during the grieving process. This view of grieving as a phased process became the dominant model, enhanced by further elaboration of the specific stages involved.

Kubler-Ross's (1970) five stages of dying: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance, followed the phase-model pattern, and were taken over wholesale and applied to grieving. Sanders (1989) suggested five definitive stages of grief: shock, awareness of the loss, conservation or withdrawal, healing and renewal. Worden (1991), following in this grief-as-a-staged-process tradition, proposes a series of tasks, rather than stages: accepting the reality of the loss, working through the pain, adjusting to life without the deceased, moving on with life. Rando (1993) lists six component processes of grief: recognizing the loss, reacting to the separation, recollecting the deceased, relinquishing former attachments, readjusting to the new world, and reinvesting in new relationships.

Despite the fact that this orderly, phased model of grief became a norm-based prescription for progress towards recovery in the "clinical lore" of bereavement therapy and counselling (Walter 1993, 1999a; Wortman and Silver 1989), the original proponents of these stage theories took pains to

point out that the phases are by no means clearcut, and do not occur in a linear fashion. Bowlby himself (1980, p. 85) notes that “any individual may oscillate for a time back and forth between any two of them”. And this is precisely what Stroebe and Schut’s (1999) “dual-process” model describes, a more chaotic grief experience in which the griever finds himself continually oscillating between two orientations: that of dwelling on the past and mourning what is lost; and that of accepting the post-loss situation and trying to create a new life for the future. The balance between what Stroebe and Schut term “the loss and restoration orientations” is seen as changing over time with the unfolding of the grief process, and across cultures according to which of the two concerns traditionally receives greater emphasis in the particular griever’s society.

The sensitivity of grief to culture has not always been recognized in the development of grief theory. The influential early work of Bowlby and Parkes, after all, was rooted in a biologically-based approach, seeing grief in evolution from the animal to the human species, and thus implying universality throughout the latter. Even at the end of the century, Archer, viewing grief as an entirely natural human reaction, asserts its “universal occurrence in the human species, whatever the culture” (1999, p.249).

As cross-cultural studies of grief began to emerge in the second half of the century, the general consensus seemed to be that the expression of grief might vary with culture, but that the underlying experience was pretty much a human universal. Rosenblatt et al (1976) examined grief in a wide variety of cultures, and concluded that the general reactions were not dissimilar to those reported in western societies, but that cultural traditions and habits tended to emphasise different aspects of the grieving process, heightening some and reducing others. Raphael (1983) took into consideration the “transcultural aspects” of bereavement, but decided that they served to underline the universality of grief and reflect its basic processes. Stroebe and Stroebe (1987) determined that there were no evidenced instances from ethnographic accounts of loss being met with emotional indifference, although the nature of the expression of the emotions involved will vary from culture to culture. But, as Currer (2001, p.51) points out, Parkes himself

shifted his stance somewhat on the universality of grief over two decades, from a confident assertion that “the experience of grief is nearly universal” (Glick et al. 1974, p.11) to a distinctly more qualified speculation that, despite the strong influence of cultural context, “there may still be fundamental consistencies, themes and truths that appear in one culture after another” (Parkes et al. 1996, p.6). And Rosenblatt (1993, 2003) too was to modify his earlier views over time in favour of greater cultural variability

These contributions to the development of grief theory from the field of psychology over the course of the twentieth century are clearly perceptible in the commonly held concept of grief today, with its themes of illness and medicalisation, of a staged process leading to recovery, and of universal applicability. They advance a model of grief which displays many of the values and features of western modernity, and which reflects the dominant discourse of that society, “a medical, scientific discourse, encouraging the separation of spheres” (Howarth 2000, p. 135). The implied world-view is one of clear-cut boundaries between sick and healthy, between absence and presence, between the living and the dead, between the past, the present and the future. The almost mechanistic nature of the grieving process, with an integral series of stages leading to a final outcome, fits with a scientific, rational ethos that assumes all problems have a solution if dealt with in a logical and expertly advised manner. The ultimate personal responsibility of the griever for the progress of their own internal grief process reflects the modernist principles of autonomy and independence. And in the notions of “griefwork” and “grieving tasks”, we have echoes of the work ethic so fundamental to progress in modern western society.

Grief as a temporary condition, an illness with an embarrassing and debilitating set of symptoms, is a necessary construct in a society whose members are expected to be continually fully engaged in economic activity, either production or consumption. And casting off the old in order to make room for the new, as the bereaved are encouraged to do, imitates the pattern of consumption behaviour necessary for the maintenance of a modern consumer society. In such a world, where the pursuit of individual personal happiness is the universally agreed aim, sanctioned opportunities for

unhappiness have to be severely restricted. Thus grief is accepted as a legitimate reaction to bereavement and death, the one loss scenario that still renders the modern world of science and technology impotent, but is less commonly recognized as an acceptable response to other types of loss.

Finally, this model of grief, assuming universal applicability bar only a few tweaks of adjustment to suit background culture, reflects the ethnocentric tendencies of twentieth century western society, imagining its various economic, political and social structures to be appropriate for any society anywhere in the world, and attempting to fashion the global community in its own capitalist, liberal, democratic image.

The Social Angle

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the model of grief outlined above was seriously challenged. Wortman and Silver's (1989) article on the "Myths of Coping with Loss" marked a turning point. They argued that the evidence for the "griefwork" hypothesis did not stand up and that there was "a perpetuation of unrealistic assumptions about the normal process of coping with loss" (p.354). These assumptions included the inevitability of depression and distress in grief, the necessity of "working through" a loss until "recovery" is reached, and the treatment of alternative patterns of grieving as deviant or pathological. Their conclusion stressed the variability of individual reaction to loss, and the need to recognize this variability in an open and non-judgmental way.

The social location of the griever became the new focus of attention, and grief theory now embraced many new ideas that served both to challenge and expand the previous paradigm. The grieving individual was viewed in relation to his society and social networks, and to the effects of these on his grieving experience. The importance of the social context had not exactly been ignored previously, as evidenced in the work of Gorer (1965), Marris (1958) and Hobson (1964), who had all taken account of social factors in their studies of the bereaved. Parkes too (1971) had made references to the

"psychosocial transitions" of the grief process in his work. But this new wave of socially oriented input was deeper and more far-reaching than anything that had gone before, involving a reappraisal of the understanding of loss, a new appreciation of the make-up of individual identity, and a focus on the grieving individual through the lens of the culture and society from which that identity is derived.

The notion of "disenfranchised grief" (Doka 1987, 1989, 2002) is based on the premiss that society only accords "the right to grieve" (2002, p.5) in certain specific situations. Every society has norms or rules laying down what sort of losses can be grieved, how and for how long they can be grieved, who can do the grieving, and how much support they should receive from others while grieving. Grief occurring outside these socially sanctioned situations is not always acknowledged or validated. As Walter (1999a, p.120) puts it, "Grief is regulated, controlled, patrolled, policed" in all societies. Doka (2002) proposes five broad categories of disenfranchised grief. The first is where the relationship between deceased and bereaved is not considered to be socially acceptable, as with extramarital lovers or homosexual partners. The second is where the loss is not deemed significant, as with the death of a pet animal, or the loss of a job. The third is where the griever is not considered capable of grief, as in the case of the very young, or the mentally incapacitated. The fourth centres on the circumstances of the death being grieved, as in suicide, capital punishment, or AIDS-related cases. And the final category concerns the way in which the grief is expressed, certain modes of expression, such as wailing or loud lamentation, going against the grieving norms of many societies (Doka and Davidson 1998, pp. 7-105).

Earlier work on the effects of job loss on the chronically unemployed (Jahoda et al. 1932), or of change of residence on people forced to move through slum clearance, or for the purposes of employment or higher education (Marris 1974), had noted the grief-like nature of the reactions to the changes involved. But the concept of disenfranchised grief now served to extend grief-triggering loss far beyond the traditional bereavement context to a variety of situations such as the loss of a pet (Kellehear and Fook 1997; Straub 2004); the loss of a job through redundancy, retirement or business failure (Archer

and Rhodes 1995; Shepherd 2003); the loss of a relationship through breaking up, divorce, fostering or adoption (Baum 2003; Boals and Klein 2005; Edelstein et al. 2001; Haight et al. 2002); the loss of a country through migration, enforced exile or relocation (Chamove and Soeterik 2006; Doron 2005; Mirdal 2006; Ward and Styles 2003); the loss of physical capacities through age or illness (Grimmer et al. 2004; Niemeier 2008; Roman 2008); the loss of a childhood and innocence (Boothby et al. 2006; Robinson 2005); or the loss of a hope or dream through termination, miscarriage or neonatal death (Lovell 1997; McCreight 2004; Riches and Dawson 2000; Thachuk 2007). The general tendency to underestimate certain categories of loss is well exemplified by Footman (1998), who, in the context of her own grief over the death of her daughter, writes "reactions to the loss of an object are - on the whole - but an approximation to the reactions experienced after the loss of a loved person" (p.292). But the wide range of grief-engendering situations outlined in the above references demonstrate that the significance of any loss, be it of person, object, capacity or aspiration, is only for the individual experiencing it to know, regardless of any judgement made by society.

The significance placed on any loss would seem to be determined by the effect that loss has on an individual's self-identity. Marris (1974, p.32) argues that "the fundamental crisis of bereavement arises not from loss of others, but the loss of self". He defines this "loss of self" as the shattering of identity, the disruption of continuity, the invalidation of purposes learned and consolidated through a lifetime's experience. Such a turn of events necessitates adaptation to the unpredicted and unwelcome changes that have occurred, the adaptation involving a profound conflict between contradictory impulses to preserve the past, and to accept the reality of the loss. Grief can therefore be seen as being about damage to the sense of self, and the attempts to repair that damage. Significant loss undermines ontological security, the basic confidence about being in the world that is an essential foundation for the fashioning of self-identity, and which is largely derived from taken-for-granted routines, learned in childhood and maintained thereafter through everyday social interaction (Giddens 1991). Taking a Foucauldian (1972) view of social reality as the product of historically and

culturally specific discourses, every society can be seen as having a repertoire of "cultural scripts" available for projects of self-identity, for the construction of personal narratives within the overarching social and cultural framework. Significant loss involves a rupture in the personal narrative, and grief relates to that discontinuity and to attempts to reconstruct the narrative so as to restore meaning and purpose to life (Seale 1998, pp. 193-211; Walter 1996).

If loss, from this angle, implies a dislocation from the complex and intricately woven social moorings that stabilise individual identity, grief is increasingly understood as manifesting in a variety of forms related to that identity, to the individual's social and cultural location. Who we are influences how we grieve, and grieving styles are consequently seen to differ in accordance with social categories. Gender, for example, is associated with a spectrum of grieving styles, from intuitive and feeling-based at one end, to instrumental and thinking-based at the other, representing for western society the typical female and male responses respectively (Doka and Martin 1998). Many studies further elaborate on the gendered nature of grieving (e.g. Cline 1997; Riches and Dawson 2000, pp.48-73; Sanders 1998; Staudacher 1991; Stillion and MacDowell 1997; Thomas and Striegel, 1995; Thompson 1997). Age is another variable bearing on grieving style (eg. Corr 1998; Payne et al. 1999, pp. 54-69; Sanders 1992), and while the psychologist might relate this variability to different developmental stages of the lifespan, the sociologist will recognize social norms as to how different age groups, young children, teenagers, adults and the elderly, are expected to react to bereavement and to go about their grieving.

Thus the big social picture, the dominant cultural discourse, can be seen to dictate the scripts available to different gender, age and other social groupings, and to influence the various styles of grief response. This has been increasingly recognised from the latter years of the twentieth century, as evidenced by the amount of literature dealing with crosscultural aspects of grief and the enormous diversity of grief responses across cultures (e.g. Firth 2001; Irish 1997; Irish et al. 1993; Kalish and Reynolds 1976; Klass 1996; Lofland 1985; Parkes et al. 1996; Rosenblatt 1993, 1997, 2001, 2003; Wikan

1988). While, as mentioned above in the previous section of this chapter, most of this literature suggests the presence of a universal core to the bereavement experience, it acknowledges wide differences across cultures with regard to what a bereaved person might actually think or feel, and to how he might behave.

Within western culture, this social approach to grief has also affected one of the original tenets of grief theory: the need to disengage, to let go and move on. Klass, Silverman and Nickman's (1996) theory of "continuing bonds" challenged the decathetic model which had been dominant throughout the twentieth century, arguing that evidence points to many bereaved people remaining connected to the deceased, continuing their relationship to the dead person beyond bereavement. The maintenance of such continuing bonds appears to facilitate grieving "and support healthy ways for the living to be in the world" (Goss and Klass 2005, p.4). By internalising a representation of the deceased, the bereaved can preserve an interactive and evolving relationship, different to but based on the relationship enjoyed before death. And in addition to such psychological introjections, more overtly social ties can be nurtured through acknowledgement of and reference to the deceased in everyday conversation, and in discussion at meetings of self-help groups for the bereaved. Walter's (1996) "biographies" also fulfil the function of sustaining ties, in that they enable the living to integrate the memory of the dead into their ongoing lives, and thus refashion the web of social relations essential to their own self-identity.

This perspective of individual identity and sense of self as being rooted in a network of shifting relationships with others, in social location in the world, has had a profound impact on grief theory in recent years. It has been enthusiastically adopted in the psychological domain, as can be seen from many of the references noted above, with research on grief "symptoms" associated with different types of loss, and on the grieving styles and trajectories of members of a variety of different social groupings. Its influence in the psychotherapeutic sphere is evident in the increasing use of narrative as therapy in post-loss "meaning reconstruction" (Attig 1996; Neimeyer 2001; Walter 1996); and in the proliferation of support and self-help groups for

specific communities of the bereaved where “continuing bonds” is at the core of their communal grieving (Klass 1999; Walter 2007).

The mainstream concept of grief as outlined at the beginning of this chapter still centres on the psychologically based principles which dominated twentieth century grief theory. But we can already see the influence of newer socially based approaches in the recognition that grief can be triggered by a wider range of losses than the traditional bereavement through death, and that there has to be allowance for individual variations in the grieving experience. It seems inevitable that many of the other ideas stemming from this social perspective will also be absorbed into the common understanding of grief and create a semantic shift sooner rather than later. Small, for example, argues (2001, p.36) that "continuing bonds" is likely to become the new orthodoxy among bereavement practitioners.

The dominant model of grief is changing to better reflect contemporary trends, themes and values, and the nature of its transformation fits with the dismantling of boundaries that Howarth (2000) sees as marking the transition from modern to post-modern, or late modern, society. Increased mobility and advances in technology and communications have led to a blurring of cultural boundaries, a more global world in which diversity is the norm, and ethnocentrism increasingly impractical. Personal identity in such a world is more fluid, more fragmented and subject to constant change, as new social groups, based on religious conviction, political opinion, leisure interests or sexual orientation, connect people across traditional class and ethnic boundaries, and as a lifetime of episodic portfolio posts replaces a job for life. A discernible diminution of faith in science and rational thought, a disappointment in their ability to deliver the promised happiness of the consumer age or to ensure continued progress and improvement, opens the door to a less clearcut, if more intriguing, world: a world where the past exerts more fascination than an uncertain future, where stories are considered more engaging than processes, and where basic human relationality is perceived as having more potential than scientific method. Walter (2007) may see a "normative vacuum" in post-modern grief, but perhaps this very normlessness is in itself the new social norm.

Analysing Grief: The Fundamentals

Probing beyond the different approaches to grief, without discarding or ignoring the various insights they provide, is it possible to discern any basic, essential features which can be said to characterise the grieving phenomenon? What are the constituent elements of the “core experience” that so many studies of grief refer to while they are engaged in elaborating on the diversity of the myriad manifestations of grief?

The rest of this chapter explores in some detail what appear to be the fundamentals of grief, the definitive components of the grieving experience that can be teased out from the plethora of studies on grief reviewed above. These are, firstly, the initial identity-damaging loss which triggers the grief; secondly, the griever’s emotional reaction to that loss; thirdly, the griever’s attempt to make some sense of the loss and to construct a new self-identity in the changed circumstances of the post-loss situation; and, finally, the social context in which the griever finds himself, and the influence of the interaction between the griever and that context on the shaping of the specific consequences arising from any particular incidence of loss and subsequent grief.

Loss

All grief arises from loss. But not all loss gives rise to grief. Loss involves a transition from the presence of something to its absence, from having something, to no longer having it. If what is possessed is perceived as undesirable, then its loss is to be welcomed, and may even come about as a result of purposeful action. If what is possessed is perceived as desirable, or, at the very least, not undesirable, then its loss will be unwelcome. The significance of any individual instance of loss is a matter of perception, dependent on the value placed upon what is lost. Values are social constructions; hence the perception is ultimately dependent on social location and particular social context.

For example, weight loss will be welcomed by an overweight young woman in western society trying to appear more attractive, while it will be unwanted in a society where plumpness is considered a feature of sexual attractiveness. Loss of wealth is considered a calamity in a materialist society, but may be seen as a developmental step by someone on a spiritual path. The loss of virginity for a young man is viewed in many societies as a cause for celebration, a coming of age rite; whereas for a young unmarried woman in a conservative society it will be perceived as shame and humiliation, for herself and her family. The death of a small child is regarded as a very painful loss for a western mother (Davis 1996; Finkbeiner 1996; Rosof 1994); while a mother from a society where resources are scarce and pregnancies numerous, and where the religious culture translates dead babies into "little angels", would be more likely to treat such a death with relative indifference or equanimity (Scheper-Hughes 1993). The impact of any loss can only be understood in terms of its unique significance to a particular loser in a specific context, in terms of the value placed on what is lost.

But there would appear to be more to loss than attributing value to the object of loss on a scale of desirability, and essentially characterising the loss experience with reference to a pleasure/pain continuum. For it seems that the radical change to the status quo which loss entails might be intrinsically undesirable in itself. Marris (1974) argues that conservatism is a fundamental human impulse, and that the change involved in loss presents a threat to the deep-seated need for continuity, to the principles of regularity which govern the predictability of life. Maintenance of the status quo is the default position, any innovation being driven by motivations of identity enhancement, "by the incompatibility of present life with our self-conception, rather than by its intrinsic disadvantages" (p.123). The investment of effort and energy in the construction of a world-view, based on an accumulation of meaningful perceptions drawn from years of experience, must be safeguarded, and the continuity of the familiar patterns of life afforded by this world-view preserved.

The concept of loss aversion, central to prospect theory (Tversky and Kahneman 1979), supports this view. Prospect theory, developed as an

alternative to expected utility theory (Neumann and Morgenstern 1944), seeks to explain the motivations underlying decision-making processes that involve evaluation of risk, and is widely used in finance, economics and marketing. It has also been applied to strategic decision-making in other spheres. For example, Lynn (1999), a military historian, argues that prospect theory can provide a framework for understanding the later foreign policy of Louis XIV, whose main drive was to defend what he already possessed, undertaking greater risk and expending more effort in pursuit of this aim than in the acquisition of new possessions. Prospect theory has also been applied to more recent strategic decision-making, including situations of international conflict (Farnham 1995) and issues of American foreign policy (McDermott 1998), illustrating how greater risks are always taken in retaining what is already owned than in acquiring something new.

Gal (2006) argues that the concept of loss aversion is superfluous. He sees the loss/gain trade-off which prospect theory regards as central to decision-making scenarios as less relevant than a basic status quo/change trade-off. His proposal of a psychological law of inertia as more fundamental to human behaviour than loss aversion, chimes well with Marris's arguments, confirming an innate proclivity to prefer maintenance of the status quo over change.

Essentially, there is no difference between loss aversion and status quo bias, any apparent divergence between the two resting on a superficial distinction between the states of being and of having. For all practical purposes, who we are equates with what we have, inasmuch as our identity is defined by things that we possess. These possessions are not only tangibles, like wealth or power or beauty; they are also the beliefs, values, assumptions, memories, habits, predispositions, passions, expectations, prejudices, resentments, affections, and so on, which we have acquired over years of experience and to which we become attached as a self-conception and a personal world-view. So attached are we to these intangibles, that we carry most of them unquestioningly and almost unconsciously, taking them to be concrete givens about ourselves and the world around us, rather than constructions that we

retain on a fluctuating, temporary and socially and culturally contextualised basis.

And these intangible constructions are every bit as susceptible to loss as our tangible possessions, their disappearance leaving us in a minimal biological state of “bare life” (Agamben 1998), a condition to which we are all ultimately reducible. The more attached we are, the more unquestioningly an assumption, a value or a belief is held, the greater impact its loss is likely to have. In the most extreme cases, such loss will be perceived as traumatic, as “threatening the intactness of the person” (Cassell 2004, p.32), as “a personal sense of violation” (Wilkinson 2005, p.28), as a “painful awareness that the infrastructures of life, which provide the foundation for feelings of security or protection, rest purely on social construction” (Fierke 2007, p.138).

Trauma itself is essentially a social construction, formally entering the vocabulary of psychology in 1980, in the context of the Vietnam War (American Psychiatric Association 1980). The shell-shock of the first world war and the battle-fatigue of the second were given a new label, a set of symptoms and a recommended treatment programme, and the problem of American veterans whose understanding of their country and themselves had been turned upside down by their war experiences, was neatly medicalised (Edkins 2003; Tal 1996). The diagnosis of post-traumatic stress syndrome, which turns distressing life events into a pathological condition, is now routinely applied worldwide (Edkins 2003; Summerfield 1998).

But no event is traumatic per se: it is only perceived as traumatic if it involves an inability to place the experience within the schemes of prior knowledge, to allocate meaning to it (Blanchot 1986; Bracken 1998; Caruth 1995; Edkins 2006; Shay 1995; Tal 1996; Van der Kolk and Van der Hart 1995; Van der Veer 1998). Tal (1996) sees the basic wound of trauma as the drastic uprooting of belief, since trauma is enacted outside the bounds of what the trauma sufferer might consider to be ‘normal’ human experience. Or, as Van der Veer (1998, p.57) simply puts it, “Victims of traumatic experiences have undergone an experience.....they did not imagine could happen”. The

traumatic event questions fixed assumptions and affronts the established understanding of self and world. Being outside the 'normal' range of experience, language cannot be found to describe it; it resists conceptualisation. "All words seemed inadequate, worn, foolish, lifeless, whereas I wanted them to be searing", says survivor Elie Wiesel (1978, p.201) of his attempts to communicate his holocaust experiences. Equally, the traumatic event resists the continuity imposed on 'normal' life: Edkins (2003) refers to "trauma time" as opposed to linear time; Fierke (2006) contrasts "a dissociated traumatic present" with linear narrative time; and Langer (1997) sets the "durational time" of trauma against the norm of "chronological time".

While Newmark (1995) suggests that use of the term trauma could well be expanded so as to make it representative of the whole state of modernity, some feel that its currency is already debased enough through overuse with reference to a wide variety of distressing events (Bell 2006; Gray and Oliver 2004). Certainly, the term is widely used in collocation with grief in academic literature: a basic search of the Web of Knowledge for articles on grief, for example, throws up numerous references to "grief and trauma", "traumatic grief", "post-traumatic grief" and "complicated grief after traumatic loss". Definitions of trauma, such as "Traumatisation refers to extreme painful experiences which are so difficult to cope with they are likely to result in psychological dysfunction in the short and the long term" (Van der Veer 1998, p.4); or "Trauma is a transformative experience, and those who are transformed can never entirely return to a state of previous innocence" (Tal 1996, p.119), could equally apply to grief. There is clearly a degree of overlap.

Simpson (1997), writing in the context of traumatic bereavements and death-related PTSD, highlights the commonality of symptoms between grief and post-traumatic stress. But it is also in terms of symptoms that any differences between the two are generally drawn. Thus grief is deemed to have sadness as a key emotion, trauma tending to fear or horror; grief involves yearning for what is lost, trauma prefers avoidance; grief can talk, trauma is silent; grief is able to get on with life to some extent, trauma disfigures identity and shatters

world view; grief is preoccupied with who or what has been lost, while trauma is obsessed with the event itself, the scene of the trauma (Jacobs 1999; Mitchell and Everly 2001; National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children, www.starrtraining.org/tlc; Raphael and Martinek 1997).

Fierke (2004) places trauma on a continuum with grief, the latter at the social, community end, the former at the isolated, individual end. This argument, based on her view of trauma as a form of human insecurity, underlines the liminal space in which traumatic events occur, outside of the normal social context. The concept of betrayal trauma (Freyd 1996), involving violation by the people or institutions on which survival depends, stems from the same premiss of underlying social trust and interdependence as the bedrock of meaningful existence. The loss of that trust, the realisation that the world does not always play by these rules, serves to set the trauma sufferer apart from the society to which he previously thought he belonged.

Rando (1997) attaches trauma to loss, rather than to the grief that arises from it, when she observes that in all trauma there is loss, and that in the majority of losses there is significant trauma. And perhaps trauma is best viewed in this way, as an attribute of the grief-triggering event, belonging properly to the perception of the loss that inspires grief and marking that loss as being of the most unwelcome and deeply damaging kind. In its original physical sense, trauma is the hurt, the initial wound that gives rise to subsequent pain and suffering. Loss can similarly be seen as the first step on the grief trajectory, its significance determined by the extent to which it affects the bearings whereby we normally locate ourselves in time and place; the world-view we have built up over years of accumulated experience and effort; the image we carry with us of who we really are. Any loss substantial enough to inspire grief involves the apprehension of “a mode of dispossession that is fundamental to who I am” (Butler 2004, p.28). At the most extreme, traumatic end of the spectrum, it may entail a confrontation with “bare life” (Agamben 1998), but, at whatever point along the scale, it will certainly result in a life that seems significantly barer than it was before.

Emotional Response

The immediate response to significant loss, as reflected in both the grief and trauma literature referenced above, is one of numbness and disbelief (Parkes 1972), denial (Kubler-Ross 1970), and shock (Alexander 2004a). The natural reaction to radical change and disruption, and to the inability to make sense of it, seems to be a state of bewildered disorientation, apparently indicating that the full impact of the loss fails to register. This initial response, typified by a lack of feeling, has been described as a psychological interim defensive coping measure that serves to protect the griever from that impact (Stroebe et al. 1993).

The subsequent reaction, however, is characterised by a turmoil of emotion: sadness, anger, aggression, guilt, regret, self-reproach, fear, anxiety, yearning, powerlessness, loneliness, hopelessness, despair, all feature in the grief literature, often alongside concomitant physical ‘symptoms’ such as crying, poor concentration, lack of appetite, inability to sleep, and so on. The occasional admixture of positive emotions, relief, for instance, when a death finally takes place after a long, trying and painful illness, or happiness arising from good memories of the pre-loss situation, is recognised. But in general the response is described in terms of negative emotions, even apathy, the “emotion of emotionlessness” (Barbalet 1998, p. 24), being put into this category because of its intrinsic unnaturalness in the face of the disruptive loss experience.

Emotions are defined as internal mental processes, often accompanied by physiological changes, which help the individual to make subjective meaning of the world (Abu-Lughod and Lutz 1990). They are elicited by events or situations that are evaluated as either advancing (positive emotions) or threatening (negative emotions) the individual’s interests, goals or ‘concerns’ (Frijda 1986); and they occur as a result of a rational, if often automatic and sometimes even unconscious, appraisal of the meaning and significance of such events and situations (Lazarus 1991). From this definition, emotions can be understood as essentially socially constituted and configured, as regulated by social constraints and values (Leach and Tiedens 2004).

Emotional experiences are determined by social interactions, by the structural relations of power and status which elicit them, and these experiences serve, in turn, to motivate courses of action which are capable of bringing about a change of status in those relations (Barbalet 1998).

Whether emotions are subject to cultural variability, or are biological commonalities for all of humanity, is a debate beyond the scope of this study. Ekman (1972) initially set out to disprove the Darwinian biologically-based evolutionary theory of emotion, convinced that he would find emotions to be determined by culture. But after documenting emotional expression and its recognition across a number of cultures, he concluded that certain basic emotions, namely, anger, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness and surprise, are universally encoded in facial expressions. Nussbaum (2001) steers a middle course between the two positions by arguing that while “all known societies have some variety of the major emotion types: love, fear, grief, anger, jealousy, envy, compassion and some others” (p.163), emotional taxonomies vary widely across societies, and language and cultural differences serve to shape emotional life and experience.

Certainly, when it comes to the display of emotional response to loss, anthropologists and ethnographers attest to wide cultural variation. For the tribes of Papua New Guinea, anger and an assertive drive for compensation are associated with bereavement (Rosaldo 1980; Schieffelin 1985); in Iran, sadness, despair and guilt are dominant (Good et al. 1985); in Japan, sorrow, along with regret at not having done enough for the deceased while alive, are the prominent emotional overtones (Goss and Klass 2005). In some societies, emotional reaction must be contained: in Bali, cheerfulness has to be maintained for the sake of others (Wikan 1990); in Buddhist Thai villages, emotional displays are kept low-key, subdued and short-lived, as an indication that loss, death and suffering are accepted as a normal part of life (Keyes 1985). Amongst the Amazonian Wari, for whom both thought and emotion are located in the physical body, with no Cartesian mind/body split, the response to loss is crying and refusing food and drink (Conklin 2001).

Wierzbicka (2004) argues that the anglocentricity intrinsic to much of the theorising about emotion underestimates how emotional experience itself is filtered through the concepts of a linguistic framework and the shared cultural and social expectations encoded in a common language. She proposes a basic metalanguage of universal concepts that might help to capture the commonalities of human emotional experience which underlie these cultural differences. For example, culture-specific bundles of semantic components like 'grief' or 'sadness' would be translated in this metalanguage into statements like: "Something bad is happening to me. I don't want this to be happening. I feel something bad now." (p. 590). This analysis pares the emotional descriptor down to the basics: a negative evaluation of an event or situation; the consequent marking of that event or situation as undesirable; and the evocation of unpleasant feelings by that event or situation. And from this analysis, Wierzbicka suggests, a concept of pain emerges that is more universally relevant and more fundamental to common human experience than the original culture and language-bound descriptors of emotion.

Certainly, pain, in tandem with suffering, a term with which it is so frequently collocated that the two have become mutually defining, would seem to function in a very similar way to grief and trauma, though pain and suffering are equally applied to the physical as to the emotional and mental spheres. Cassell (2004), writing about pain and suffering within a strictly medical context, sees pain, in this physical setting, as the original injury, located in the body. The perceived meaning of this pain influences the occurrence, amount and quality of any subsequent suffering. If the pain is perceived as a threat to the wholeness or intactness of the person, fear enters the picture through the perception of anticipated future events, along with self-conflict, encompassing guilt, anger, self-reproach and sadness, over the perceived new reality of the injured self vis-à-vis the forces of society and group life that shaped the old reality. This emotionally charged distress amounts to suffering, which engulfs the whole person. In Cassell's view, bodies have pain, people suffer. And loss is the source of this suffering, with injury or disease entailing a concomitant loss of roles, abilities, behaviours, dreams,

hopes, aspirations, and so on: the loss of any one or combination of the parts that go to make up a whole person.

Moving from the realm of the medical to the social, suffering brought about by conditions of social marginalisation and political powerlessness can also be seen as based on loss, and on a negative evaluation of the dispossession involved. Wilkinson (2005) draws attention to social conditions which render people superfluous by removing roles, aspirations, behaviours and dreams that might in other circumstances be considered legitimate for them to possess. The loss of a meaningful sense of social inclusion, the chronic assault on what might be regarded as necessary for personal wholeness, leads to anguish, misery and distress. Bourdieu's (1999) formidable catalogue of social suffering details the lived experience of this distress, brought about by a painful confrontation of social differences, by a perspective on a privileged world from a position of obscurity and inferiority within it. Unable to self-identify as worthwhile members of society, the socially marginalised speak through the many interviews and brief introductions of this work with an expressive intensity, giving voice to the powerlessness, hopelessness, pathos and despair that characterise their lives.

Illness, injury, political powerlessness and social exclusion are part and parcel of the human experience, in the same way as bereavement and loss are inevitable facts of life. But the way in which they are met appears to differ across time and culture according to the meaning placed on pain and suffering, their evaluation as negative or positive, as representing threat or opportunity. The main role of world religions has perhaps been to provide the societies whose culture they have shaped with a meaningful and positive interpretation of suffering (Bowker 1997). Jewish scripture, for example, teaches that pain and suffering are to be borne with an acceptance of God's purpose, and that this endurance can effect atonement for oneself and others. The Christian view, based on the suffering of Christ himself, is of pain and suffering as ennobling and purifying experiences, a path to virtue and goodness. Islam also sees a redemptive quality in suffering as a test of submission to God's will and as a chastisement for sins committed. While the

Abrahamic religions tend to convert pain and suffering into a form of sacrifice, Hinduism's concept of karma presents suffering as a just consequence of previous actions and an opportunity for spiritual development. Buddhism similarly regards suffering as a condition we bring on ourselves through our own deluded desires for and attachments to ephemeral worldly things, but a condition we can free ourselves from by waking up to the illusory nature of so-called reality and consciously ceasing our craving and clinging (Bowker 1970).

Western philosophy, meanwhile, has sought to respond to suffering through understanding and rationality, based on a view of man as self-determining. For the ancient Greek philosophers, suffering was senseless and inexplicable. It was a consequence of disorder in the cosmos, and man's role was to work at achieving order. The Stoics regarded affective response as volitional, and advocated the perfection of the rational mind through the taking of responsibility for judgements made, and thus for the emotions arising as a result of these judgements (Bakalis 2005, pp. 217-34; Graver 2007). Epicurus advanced the notion that the greatest good for man could be achieved by pursuing a life of mental tranquillity, free from fear, pain and similar emotional disturbance (Bakalis 2005, pp. 190-217). But it was with the enlightenment of the eighteenth century that love of man completely replaced love of God and the autonomy of the human order took over from a cosmic order in which suffering had a place (Gonzalbo 2006, pp. 45-64). Utility, reducing the spectrum of human experience to pleasure and pain, became the supreme principle of moral value and suffering ceased to have much worth (Amato 1990, pp. 75-102): the elimination of all forms of pain and suffering, whether in the physical body or the body politic of society, became the moral imperative. The nineteenth century witnessed Marxist attempts to eradicate suffering through a change in the power relationships within western capitalist society. And the twentieth century heralded the wholesale medicalisation of pain and suffering, their complete eradication now viewed as an increasingly attainable goal.

Hence the medical framing of trauma, as a pathology of the late twentieth century, followed the somewhat earlier medicalisation of grief, as a condition

that “isolates the pain associated with a loved one’s death as a kind of anomaly in human life” (Wierzbicka 2004, p. 582). In this way, different terms are introduced for different instances of what can be regarded as essentially the same phenomenon, and these words act as filters for our experience: “Each change in terminology is accompanied by a change in the internal content of the notion signified by the descriptive category” (Cassell 2004, p.5). Strip the terminology away, and, whatever descriptors are applied, grief, trauma, pain and suffering all appear to boil down to the same thing. They centre on an experience of loss, actual or anticipated, that is interpreted negatively as presenting a threat to the wholeness or intactness of the person and that, on the basis of this judgement, gives rise to a variety of negative emotions.

Making Sense of Loss: Meaning-Making and Memory

There would seem to be general agreement amongst writers on pain and suffering that pain entails the necessity to make some sense of it, to attribute to it some positive meaning. Amato (1990) sees pain as compelling us to self-interpretation. Ricoeur (1995) defines suffering as the experience of perpetually failing to make sense of pain. Wilkinson (2005), recognising that it is the interpretation of an injurious event that determines whether suffering or distress is experienced, views suffering as dependent on how “such events subsequently leave their mark upon the meanings of self and society” (p.93). In this context, suffering becomes “a compulsive struggle to reconstitute a positive meaning for self and society” (p.11).

Certainly, a major element of the grief experience, according to the literature reviewed in earlier sections of this chapter, appears to be the construction of a meaningful new sense of self in the changed circumstances of the post-loss world. Whether characterised as healing or recovery in a medicalised context; as resolution or outcome in a goal-oriented, problem-solving framework; or as repair and reconstruction, in the sense of re-forging the fundamental-to-identity social bonds damaged in the loss experience, the

griever has somehow to make sense of his loss and to create for himself a coherent new reality in its wake.

Marris (1992) observes how the loss of a significant relationship involves the disintegration of the whole structure of meaning centred upon it, and how this structure of meaning has to be renewed in some form. Riches and Dawson (2000, pp. 15-47) see grief as incorporating this renewal process, with the bereaved attempting to establish order on the chaos caused by the loss of a significant relationship. They argue that the ability to give meaning to the death, using the various personal, cultural and social resources available for meaning-making, is essential to successful post-bereavement adjustment. Nadeau (2001) demonstrates the importance of positive meaning-making to this adjustment, by showing that the way in which family members attach meaning to a death within the family, as, for example, a blessed release, or as a preventable accident, is critical to their adaptation to bereavement. Neimeyer and Keesee (1998) underline the fact that this meaning reconstruction at the heart of grieving is a dynamic, active process. Attig (1996) describes it as "relearning the world". And Riches and Dawson (2000, p.72) liken the experience to the culture shock of migrants, suddenly banished from their familiar landscape and forced to adapt to a strange and frightening new environment.

Narrative is regarded as a central feature of this recreation of meaning, based on a view of humans as "inveterate meaning-makers, weavers of narratives that give thematic significance to the salient plot structure of their lives" (Neimeyer and Keesee, 1998, pp. 226-7). Neimeyer (2001) argues that important losses in our lives disrupt our taken-for-granted narratives and present a challenge to the narrative coherence which configures our experience. The meaning reconstruction involved in grieving is therefore necessarily rooted in language and narrative. Romanoff (2001) underlines the practical role of narrative as the raw material of analysis and healing, advocating the telling of stories as therapy for the bereaved. Harvey et al. (2001) suggest that in cases of deeply damaging loss, as with holocaust survivors, for example, there may actually be an inbuilt human need to tell

the story, to give an account of the experience in a socially interactive context.

The storytelling strategy gives experiences the continuity and coherence necessary to making sense of them. The construction of a durable biography of the deceased in conversation with other survivors (Walter 1996), and the maintenance of continuing bonds with the deceased in a context of social interaction (Klass et al. 1996), both utilise story-telling to integrate loss into the ongoing personal narratives of the bereaved. Moving from loss through death to loss through illness or disease, Cassell (2004, pp. 105-7) talks of the sick making sense of their illness by turning it into a story, one that features at least two protagonists, the sick person and his body. Frank's "The Wounded Storyteller" (1995) develops this theme in some detail, arguing that the sick "need to become storytellers in order to recover the voices that illness and its treatment often take away" (p. xii). The various illness narrative types he describes are all played out on the ground of the body.

The resources for this storytelling, the scripts for making sense of loss, are provided by culture, religion, community or family custom, and personal experience. Riches and Dawson (2000, pp. 15-47) categorise these as social resources, provided by family, community or groups of like-minded people; and personal resources, constituting philosophy, faith experience and personality. Neimeyer and Keesee (1998, pp. 229-38) refer rather to three dimensions which contribute to the storytelling process of meaning reconstruction: the cultural, including the language itself, beliefs and practices, and popular culture; the spiritual, covering religious and cosmological beliefs, and also encompassing humanistic frameworks; and gender, referring to masculine and feminine styles and approaches. However these resources may be characterised, stories are told, narratives constructed, by griever drawing on a fund of discourse that is consensually validated within their communities and cultures. If this discourse fails to provide adequate resources for the interpretation of any experience of loss, that experience registers as traumatic, essentially resistant to integration into the continuity and coherence of the ongoing narrative.

The continuity of narrative involves memory, fundamental to the drawing of the time-line necessary to identity. Who we are is a result of what we have done and experienced, a personal history being a prerequisite of a personal identity, "the proof as well as the record of the self's existence" (Young 1995, p.221). The construction of the self involves the configuration of personal experiences into a historic unity. Our experience of the present depends on knowledge acquired in the past; our expectations of the future are based on recollections from our past. Significant loss interrupts this continuity, damaging the personal identity which has been fashioned over time, and requiring its creative refashioning in order to repair the rupture. Walter (1999a p.70) describes bereavement as a "state of being caught between the present, a past and a lost future". Hence a radical rewriting of the past to make sense of the new present is essential to recovering the future. And memory plays a vital role in that rewriting, in the meaning-making integral to the reconstruction of the personal narrative.

Hallam and Hockey (2001) point out how memories in western culture are reified and perceived as static objects which are related to, or even identical to, the experiences from which they arise. Memory, from this angle, is a capacity, a storehouse for these objects, and remembering involves the lifting of veils, or the excavating of layers, in order to rediscover a pre-existent past. But memory can also be regarded as a means of reinventing the past, as a utility rather than a capacity, with remembering seen as an act of creation rather than of discovery. Winter (2006) views memory not as a product but as a process, one that is inherently unstable, synthetic, and open to continual reshaping. This reshaping is inevitably carried out from the perspective of the rememberer's present situation and in connection with his current systems of ideas and frameworks of meaning, since, as Empson (2007) observes, the rememberer is always part of the remembering.

Lambek (2007) suggests that remembering occurs in the space between the stream of embodied experience and the objectified narrative, itself being neither the one nor the other, and thus attributes to memory a vital role in the production of identity and personal narrative from lived experience. The dynamic and creative view of memory which this theoretical frame of

reference presents underlines the separation from experience involved in remembering. As Ricoeur (1992) points out, the act of remembering is the act of seeing oneself as another. Moreover, the use of language involved in memory and recollection distances us from the immediate lived experience: "language is the amber which preserves relics of past feelings and ideas" (Skultans 1998, p.24). Past events thus become free-floating signifiers, open to revision and reinterpretation as memories are constantly renegotiated.

And this renegotiation implies selectivity. As Derrida (1983) logically observes, a limitless memory would not, in fact, be memory, but rather infinite self-presence, therefore we are obliged to choose what to remember and, equally, what to forget. These choices are governed by the concerns or interests of current identity: there is a selective reconstruction and appropriation of those parts of the past that respond to the needs of the present (Wood 1999). The "interpretive labour of memory work" (Carsten 2007) involves a social intentionality in which who we are and what we remember are closely linked, each serving to bolster the other in the ongoing business of constructing a coherent personal identity and creating a usable past to go with it.

Memory is an integral element of the meaning-making that takes place following identity-damaging loss, but the memories which are conjured up for the stories told in the attempt to make sense of that loss are never simple records of the past. They are interpretive reconstructions, bearing the imprint of social and cultural assumptions and practices, and influenced by the parameters of the context in which they are recalled. The bereaved can choose to retain fond memories of a deceased spouse or relative which bear little trace of the latter's more habitual behaviour or character traits, while conveniently sweeping any of the less fond memories under the carpet of forgetting. The forced exile can decide that the country left behind, for all its obvious-to-others faults, is a paradise the like of which will not be easily found elsewhere on this earth. The dismissed employee can prefer to dwell on the negative aspects of his previous position, choosing to forget those features of the work he actually enjoyed or those qualities of the organisation

that he had come to appreciate. The past is always interpreted in the light of the present, refashioned to fit the current situation.

However, where an event is perceived as so traumatic that it defies comprehension and resists interpretation, that event appears to remain at the level of lived experience. Hence trauma sufferers seem condemned to replay the past through intrusive flashbacks and surprisingly literal dreams (Van der Veer 1998), their experience frozen in a painful, dissociated, traumatic present (Fierke 2006). As Winter (2006) puts it, in the context of shell-shock, "the link between memory and identity is severed" (p.52), and memory takes over the life of the shellshocked man because he cannot get the memories to fit the narrative. He cannot, in Lambek's terms, move from the lived experience to an objectified narrative that supports his sense of identity. The emotionally-charged struggle to do this, to achieve a fit between the lived experience of loss and a coherent personal history and identity, would seem to be a universal component, a fundamental dynamic, of grief.

Context and Consequences

The struggle for meaning, the effort to make sense of loss, does not take place in a vacuum. Every griever experiences grief within a social context. And every society regulates and polices grief by establishing norms for what can be grieved and who can do the grieving, and by drawing a difference between "healthy" grief, which is expressed and worked through in the consensually validated and prescribed way, and "unhealthy", ([www. cruse bereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)), "complicated" (Rando 1993) or "pathological" (Stroebe et al. 1993, pp. 23-74) grief, which has gone wrong and requires intervention and assistance. This is no less the case in multicultural societies, where information and guidance on the grieving norms of the various cultural sub-groups of society is widely available (eg. Dickenson et al. 2000; Morgan and Laungani 2002; Parkes et al. 1996; Parry and Ryan 1995; Rees 1996; Rosenblatt and Wallace 2005), the implication being that any grieving behaviour which fails to accord with these descriptions is somehow aberrant.

Resilience is recognised as the key to coping with grief, as the attribute which makes the difference between “healthy” and “unhealthy” grieving. And a variety of factors, ranging from personality traits to social and economic background, are seen as contributing to resilience, or lack thereof, in the face of grief (Bonnano and Mancini 2006, 2008; Davis et al. 1998; Folkman et al. 1996). These “risk” or “vulnerability” factors are listed as: the nature of the pre-existing relationship with the deceased; the nature of the death; availability of family and social support; concurrent stress and crises; age; gender; social class and economic status; religious background and beliefs; personality (Stroebe and Stroebe 1987). As Bradbury (1999, p.167) observes, “This list seems to describe the culture or society within which the bereaved person lives”. Basically, if the bereaved is located in a strong social position, the grief trajectory is likely to follow a “normal” path: but the more social factors there are weighing against the bereaved, the more vulnerability there is to a pathological grief reaction.

Most of these “risk” factors relate to what the grieving individual brings to the grief experience, to aspects of the griever’s pre-loss identity. In Kaufmann’s words (2002 p.68) “The self does not meet loss empty-handed but rather with psychological history and identities that contribute to the way the loss is experienced and to what the loss means”. Two of them, however, relate more directly to the ongoing post-loss situation: namely, availability of family and social support; and concurrent stress and crises. These “post-disposing” (Jordan 2005) factors characterise the immediate social context of the grief trajectory itself, and in so doing exert enormous influence on how it plays out.

Social support is widely recognised (Figley 1986; Herman 1992; Lennon et al. 1990; Lindy 1988; Payne et al. 1999; Raphael 1983; Riches and Dawson 2000; Vachon et al. 1982) as an important contributory factor in recovery from bereavement or trauma. It can be provided by informal networks of family and friends, more formal mutual self-help groups of people who find themselves in similar situations, or by the professional services on offer from medical experts, counsellors and therapists. Higgins (2002) suggests that one of the most important contributions religious belief can make to recovery from grief is the support of the religious community during the grieving

process. Stroebe et al. (2005) find limited evidence for social support buffering the bereaved against the impact of loss itself, but concede that it does appear to mitigate depressive post-bereavement symptoms. This fits with the findings of McCrae and Costa (1993) that resilience to grief displays largely in terms of the amount of time required to adapt to the post-loss reality, a speedy adaptation denoting a high level of resilience.

Wilsey and Shear (2007) argue that it is the perceived value of the social support to the griever that matters, rather than its mere availability. However, while proffered support is not always perceived as particularly helpful, lack of support, characterised in terms of absence, rudeness or aggression, is without exception perceived as unhelpful and distressing. Their finding perhaps simply reflects the fact that "Bereavement makes necessary a reliance on others for support, and in the process people can be gratified or disappointed in the response they receive" (Tedeschi and Calhoun 2006, p.107).

Concurrent crises or stressors, meanwhile, are seen as potential inhibitors of "normal" grief and recovery (Hansson and Stroebe 2007; Levy et al. 1994; Nolen-Hoeksema et al. 1994; Payne et al. 1999). The fewer "negative life events" (Moos and Schaefer 1986), such as other deaths, job loss, financial problems or relationship difficulties, happening at the same time as or in the wake of bereavement, the more likely the bereaved will be able to cope. But the simultaneous occurrence of other stressful life events will only compound the distress of the bereavement and undermine any potential resilience, serving both to complicate and exacerbate the grief experience.

These "post-disposing" factors of social support and concurrent stress neatly lend themselves to bereavement counselling tick-box questionnaires. But perhaps they represent an over-simplification of the context of the grief trajectory, a brushing over of the fact that the interdependency of social interaction persists beyond the moment of loss and that grief plays out in a highly complex and fluid dynamic of interwoven events and perceptions. The very vulnerability of the grief-stricken lays them open to manipulation or exploitation, but it is newspaper features rather than academic articles that

tell of the confidence tricksters who move in on solvent widow/ers, or of the redundant and long-term unemployed who are lured into crime. Equally, the grieving are prone to make enormous errors of judgement on entirely their own account while in the state of disequilibrium that grief engenders. This can be seen in the headlong rush into a new marriage following death or divorce, or in the acting out of the notion that death, for oneself and one's dependants, is the only option to the perceived disgrace of losing a fortune or even a livelihood. The daily news bears witness to the fact that any grief trajectory takes place in a complicated and convoluted web of causes and effects, that grief does not play out in a vacuum or against a neat list of variables, but as one strand in the tightly and intricately intertwined interactions between several lives.

Thus the context of any grief experience, in terms of both the social location of the griever and of the ongoing post-loss social interaction in which the griever is involved, serves to influence and shape the consequences of that experience. And, as a result, the consequences of grief are infinitely more wide-ranging, varied and unpredictable than the states of "recovery" or "resolution" proffered as "outcomes" by the traditional grief models. All three terms, the first redolent of medicalisation, the second of a problem-solving approach, and the third implying a mechanistic view of grieving as a contained process, signify a degree of closure, finality and stasis, that is at odds with the chaotic, messy dynamism and the perpetually unfinished business of lived experience. Corr, Nabe and Corr (2003) criticise the appropriacy of the term "recovery" because of its medical associations with return to the pre-morbid condition, and suggest possible alternatives, including healing, adjusting, managing or coping. Balk (2004) interprets recovery differently, as, in Feifel's (1977) terms, the redefinition and reintegration of the self into life following bereavement. Paletti (2008) outlines the various concepts of recovery as defined in different grief models, and concludes that basic to all of them is a fundamental notion of self-transformation following loss.

What all of these arguments share is recognition of the impossibility of any return to the status quo ante. There may be a return to a "culture of

normality" (Riches and Dawson 2000), or to "previous levels of functioning" (Weiss 1993), but any expectations of returning to "normal", in the sense of once again inhabiting the pre-loss world, are false (Payne et al. 1999). Bereaved research subjects themselves are cynical about the concept of "resolution" as a feasible or even desirable goal (Littlewood 2001), dismissing the aim of "recovery" as both inappropriate for and highly insensitive to their post-loss situations (Bennett and Bennett 2000).

Grief is clearly, by its very nature, transformative. For some griever, the transformation may be judged as producing largely negative results, manifesting in long-term mental disturbance, physical deterioration or increased risk of mortality (Lannen et al. 2008; Payne et al. 1999; Prigerson et al. 1997; Stroebe et al. 2007), with all the inherent dangers these imply. For others, the grief experience may seem to bring about mainly positive and beneficial effects, for example: increased strength of purpose and sense of self-worth; deepened understanding of self and others; stronger social bonds and relationships; heightened spirituality; enhanced appreciation of life (Berzoff 2006; Calhoun and Tedeschi 2001; Frantz et al. 2001; Richards 2001). For most, the changes wrought by the transformative properties of grief will be evaluated as entailing a fair mix of both positive and negative consequences. But in every case one thing seems certain: the person who steps off the grief bridge is not the same person that stepped on it at the moment of loss.

And this transformation occurs as an unfolding experience in which the griever is still very much linked to a social world. The ultimate consequences of the grief experience therefore reflect the dynamism of the chains of cause and effect those links imply; they are sensitive to the specific situations thrown up by that social world; and they can arise quite independently of intention, in line with the general unpredictability of lived experience. Grief should perhaps then be considered not only in terms of the eventual psychological and social outcome for the griever himself, but also with regard to the ongoing social context, to how the griever affects others as much as to how he is affected by them.

Summary

The study of grief developed over the course of the twentieth century principally in the context of bereavement. Grief was seen largely from the personal perspective, as an interior process, and much of the contribution to grief theory came from the field of psychology. Research concentrated on investigating reactions to bereavement and describing the psychological processes involved in accommodating the loss involved. The general approach to grieving was medicalised and problem-solving, with description soon turning to prescription in terms of the practical treatment and counselling of individuals suffering bereavement.

Towards the end of the century, grief was also increasingly viewed from a social angle, focussing on the web of relationships in which the griever is enmeshed, stressing his location in society. This approach, utilising contributions from sociology, served grief theory by introducing notions like disenfranchised grief, whereby society is recognised as regulating and policing both occasions and modes of expression for grief; by expanding the loss which triggers grief to a far wider set of circumstances than the traditional bereavement alone; and by establishing the cultural, social and individual variability of the grief phenomenon.

Examining grief within a holistic frame of reference which caters for the personal and social aspects together and encompasses the insights provided by both psychology and sociology, there appear to be some basic elements which can be considered characteristic of the grief experience. The first is the initial loss, the dispossession and resultant change in the status quo that inspires the grieving. The significance of this loss, its potentiality as a trigger of grief, lies in the perceived threat it presents to personal identity and sense of self. Secondly, the change in circumstances heralded by the loss is highly unwelcome, being negatively evaluated as an assault upon established self-identity, as a disruption in the continuity of the self's existence, and a welter of negative emotions arise to underline and support this adverse reaction. Thirdly, the only way out of this unfavourable situation is to work at making some sense of it, to attribute some positive meaning to life in the new post-

loss world and thus repair the damage to the sense of self caused by the changes the loss introduced. And finally, this entire experience of loss, negative evaluation and emotional reaction, with subsequent attempts to make some meaning from the post-loss situation, takes place within a specific context, in terms of the griever's own social location and of the social interactions in which he is involved during the course of his encounter with grief. This context serves to both influence and shape the grieving experience and its ultimate consequences for the individual griever himself, and also for those with whom he interacts.

As a study of human behaviour, whether approached from the personal angle as an interior process, or from the social angle with an emphasis on the griever's position and interrelationships in society, grief has been largely perceived as the domain of the individual. The fundamentals of the grieving experience outlined above have been predominantly drawn from studies of individual experience. The next chapter investigates the applicability of these fundamentals at a collective level, and explores the feasibility of grief as a collective phenomenon.

2. COLLECTIVE GRIEF: THE GRIEF OF NATIONS

"A nation is a thing that lives and acts like a man and men are the particulars of which it is composed."

(Josiah Gilbert Holland)

The first chapter concentrated on defining and describing the grief phenomenon, analysing it in terms of those fundamentals which appear to be basic to the grieving experiences examined in the literature. Whether approached from a psychological or a sociological angle, these experiences are predominantly of an intensely personal nature, framing grief firmly within the context of the individual. This second chapter moves grief from the domain of the individual to that of the collective, and investigates how grief might be understood to operate at the level of the group.

In seeking to arrive at a definition of the concept of collective grief, the nature of the relationship between the individual and the larger group to which he belongs is explored. There is also discussion of the difference between public mourning and communal grieving, and a clear distinction is drawn in the latter case between "collected" and "collective" grief, to use Olick's (1999) terms, the former referring to the individual responses to loss of the members of a group, and the latter pertaining to the reactions of the group as a whole. The emphasis is on the way in which collective grief appears to operate, affecting the group in aggregate, rippling out to its edges and down in time through its generations.

A variety of studies of grief as it affects groups are examined, although these are few by contrast to the many that deal with the individual grieving experience. The collectives which provide a focus for this body of research are the family, the work group, the local community, the interest-based group, the 'first nation' (i.e. Native American Indian communities in North America and aboriginal groups in Australia and New Zealand), and the nation. While many of these studies adopt a "collected" approach to their group of choice, a few, particularly in the fields of family bereavement and of the problems of

first nation communities, take a more authentically collective perspective with regard to their research subjects.

One fact that emerges from this survey of work on group reaction to loss is the apparent necessity for the group to present two specific features before the occurrence of collective grief can be established: namely, the containment of the group within fairly clearly delineated boundaries, and the continuity of the group over a reasonable stretch of time. Despite the fact that nations exhibit these features, being contained by borders and boasting long-term histories, there appear to be no studies of large-scale national groups reacting to loss which can be said to take a truly collective, as opposed to collected, approach to the ensuing grief experience.

The remainder of the chapter focuses on the concept of the nation, exploring various definitions and descriptions of what a nation actually is, how it is composed and functions, and how national identity is experienced and understood by its members. The fundamentals of grief, as outlined in the first chapter, are re-examined with a view to how they might conceivably apply in a national context; how loss, emotional response, meaning-making, and context and consequences, can be understood to manifest at a collective national level.

The aim of this chapter is to determine to what extent grief, as defined in the first chapter, might feasibly predicate nation, as defined here. Answers are sought to the questions: Can nations grieve? Does the concept of national grief make any sense?

Collective Grief

In post-enlightenment western culture and tradition, the perspective of the individual has been unfailingly privileged over that of the group. The relationship between the autonomous individual and the larger group, between subject and society, is a theme which has provoked much debate and given rise to large amounts of literature, to an extent which goes well beyond the scope of this dissertation. For the purposes of the argument here,

it is sufficient to establish the collective as a reality, and to comment on a few of the main theories accounting for the way in which that reality manifests.

Collective Consciousness

Durkheim (1893/1947) established the importance of the collective in social theory with his emphasis on “collective consciousness” as “the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average members of the same society an entirely different thing from particular consciences, although it can only be realised through them “ (pp. 38-9). Collective consciousness was posited as a reality external to the individual, yet critically involved in his formation and his assimilation into the social sphere. Fascinated by the manner in which individuals achieve solidarity, that degree of consensus which is the necessary condition for social existence, Durkheim viewed social coherence as dependent on the existence of collective beliefs and common sentiments. In ‘Rules of Sociological Method’ (1895/1982), he laid out his theory of the social environment as presenting a reality separate and distinct from the individuals who make up society, and of a social fact as “recognised by the power of external coercion which it exercises or is capable of exercising over individuals” (p.8). The theory was demonstrated empirically when he applied it in ‘Suicide’ (1897/1951) to what would seem to be a characteristically individual phenomenon, arguing that suicide rates are entirely dependent on social context.

Durkheim’s perspective of society in the individual, his view of the subject as an aggregation of external processes and societal conditions, was to prove extremely influential in the fields of both social and anthropological theory and research over the course of the twentieth century. His notion of the collective consciousness was reinforced from the field of psychology by Jung’s concept of the “collective unconscious”, a set of pre-experiential archetypes, motifs, myths, images and ideas which provide “a collective meaning, a meaning which is the common property of mankind” (1970, p.322). These inherited, pre-existent forms constitute, in Jung’s view (1968), a second psychic system, after the immediate personal consciousness, of a

collective and impersonal nature, and are available for the individual's formulation of meanings, contexts and patterns, for the making sense at a personal level of self and world.

The concept of a pan-human unity contained in Jung's theory of the collective unconscious can be linked with the idea of the unity of all life on earth found in Teilhard de Chardin's philosophical and spiritual arguments for "cosmic consciousness" as an evolutionary destination, and for the attainment of the "noosphere" (coined from the greek nous, meaning mind), as a quintessentially human level of pure thought, a stage above the animal biosphere (1959). Vernadsky (1945), coming from a scientific and biocentric angle rather than a philosophical and anthropocentric one, promotes a similar view of evolution as leading from the biosphere to the noosphere, where the interaction of human and nature will be consciously balanced. What seems to be described here is the development of the mother of all collective consciousnesses, the emergence of a planetary mind.

Media theorists have latched on enthusiastically to these notions, using them as the foundation of studies which regard advances in technology, mass media and communications as opportunities for the operation of collective consciousness on a scale and at a speed never before possible. The internet in particular is viewed as a perfect medium for delivery of the prophesied noosphere. Zizek (1998), on the subject of virtual reality, refers to this collective approach to cyberspace as "a neo-Jungian idea that we live in an age of mechanistic, false individualism and that we are now on the threshold of a new mutation... we all share one collective mind". In the same interview, however, he also acknowledges another approach to cyberspace, "the deconstructionist post-Cartesian one; each of us can play with his/her identities". The latter angle privileges the individual perspective over the collective one, focussing on how virtual reality offers real possibilities for Cartesian subjectivity in a context which not only permits but actively encourages shifting and multiple identities.

Collective Identity

Moving the focus from the overarching framework of the group to the individual members who compose it, from the social to the personal, brings the issue of identity to the fore. And if personal identity correlates with 'I' and social identity with 'you', then collective identity corresponds to 'we'. Personal identities are "self-designations and self-attributions regarded as personally distinctive" (Snow 2001, p.1). They refer to "characteristics of the self that are believed to be unique to the self" (Ashmore et al. 2004, p.82). Social identities, typically grounded in social roles and categories, are "attributed or imputed to others in an attempt to situate them in social space" (Snow 2001, p.1). They are "socially constructed and socially meaningful categories that are accepted by individuals as descriptive of themselves or their groups" (Thoits and Virshup 1997, p.106).

Collective identity is "first and foremost a statement about categorical membership" (Ashmore et al. 2004, p.81). This identity is shared with a group of others who have, or believe they have, certain characteristics, attributes or experiences in common, particularly by comparison with real or imagined sets of "others". The commonality, the basis of "we-ness", may be grounded in ascribed characteristics, such as gender or race, or in achieved positions, such as profession or political party (Ashmore et al. 2004; Sedikides and Brewer 2001; Simon and Klandermans 2001). But, importantly, collective identity is self-identified and not imposed externally by society. This feature renders social and communal goals intrinsic to collective identity, giving it a quality of self-direction which distinguishes it from the orientational markers of social identity. Despite clear overlap between personal, social and collective identity, and a degree of ambiguity surrounding these terms in the literature, to the extent that several theorists (e.g. Ashmore et al. 2004; Sedikides and Brewer 2001; Simon 1997; Simon and Klandermans 2001) advocate doing away with social identity as a term, collective identity would seem to differ from social identity by dint of its more dynamic and fluid nature. There is a sense of collective agency embedded within the "we-ness" (Snow 2001, p.1), and an emphasis on collective identity as process rather than property (Melucci 1989, p.34).

Collective identity is multi-dimensional, involving the cognitive, emotional, behavioural and moral aspects of shared ideas and beliefs, feelings and attitudes, values and judgements, actions and activities (Ashmore et al. 2004, p.82; Snow 2001, pp.5-6). It is created and sustained through the generation and employment of symbols which serve to bind the group internally and bound it externally, and to render it distinct from other groups through an expressed accentuation of commonalities and divergences (Eisenstadt and Giesen 1995; Snow 2001; Taylor and Whittier 1992). Dress, gesture, language, songs and stories, are among the symbolic resources drawn on for the expression of collective identity.

Finally, with regard to what Snow and Macadam (2000) term “identity correspondence”, or the link between the individuals comprising the group and its shared, overarching identity, collective identity needs to be reconciled or aligned with other identities that individual group members may possess. This seems to be achieved in two major ways. One is through identity convergence, whereby the espousal of a particular collective identity provides the opportunity for an individual to act in accordance with his personal identity. The other is through identity construction, which involves various types of identity work, such as changing the salience order of multiple identities by shifting a lower-order one to a more prominent position, as when a woman becomes part of a feminist movement or a homosexual actively identifies with gay pride; or, at the other end of the scale, a complete and dramatic transformation in which an individual sees himself as radically changed, as in the case of a road-to-Damascus type conversion to a religious or political group (Snow 2001).

And in the same way as a variety of processes appear to be involved in achieving congruity between collective and other identities, a variety of degrees of congruity are achieved. The blanket of collective identity does not cover all members of a group equally snugly: there are variations in the intensity of adherence to that identity over different individuals within the group, and in the same individual over different situations and periods of time. Shils (1957) notes the distinction between “intense and attenuated attachments” (p.141) to the central system of values within a group, an

unequal participation in that system in terms of both intensity and continuity. He refers to the phenomena of “over-participation” and “under-participation” in group value systems, but concludes that a normal distribution of attachment to the central symbols of any collective presents as a minority at either extreme, and the majority in varying degrees of attenuation or dilution in between (pp.143-4).

The definition of collective arrived at from the above involves collective consciousness, an overarching interpretive framework which is both formed by and in its turn serves to form members of the group; and collective identity, the binding and bounding sense of “we-ness” which is both embracing of and embedded in individual members of the group. Can the notion of grief, as defined in the first chapter, be understood in these terms? Collective grief would seem to presuppose a loss that critically affects the entire group, though obviously with variable intensity of affect across its individual membership. That loss would involve damage to the collective identity and a discontinuity in the ongoing narrative of the group as a whole. The sense of loss would be shared by the group in aggregate, the subsequent grief trajectory presenting a path to be followed by all its members. And the total grieving experience would register with significant impact on the overall collective consciousness of the group.

Collective Grief and Public Mourning

Before embarking on a survey of various studies which purport to examine grief at the collective level, it is perhaps necessary to make a note of what collective grief is not, and to comment on the distinction between collective grief and public or communal mourning. There is a tendency in common usage to overlap between the terms “grief” and “mourning”, particularly in a collective context, to an extent that the two are often used interchangeably. But “mourning” is associated by definition with the expression of sorrow or grief, rather than the grief itself (Oxford Dictionary of English; New Oxford American Dictionary). Academic convention also separates grief from mourning, the former seen as private, internal, and imbued with emotion; the

latter as public, observable behaviour (Hockey 2001; Howarth 2006; Lofland 1985). Grief concerns the internal feelings we have; mourning the external things we do. Grief occurs naturally in reaction to loss; mourning does not happen on its own. Didion (2005), in "The Year of Magical Thinking", strikingly describes grief as passive, something that creeps up on you, and mourning as an active process of remembering.

The concept of mourning involves socially shaped and sanctioned actions undertaken in the wake of bereavement, a formalised process of responding to a death. It involves a social obligation which is binding on the sympathisers as well as the griever, on the community as well as on the immediately bereaved. This concept informs anthropological studies of mourning, where the death rituals and customs of different groups and cultures are observed and examined, with subsequent attempts at interpretation on the basis of an assumed inherent symbolism (Bloch and Parry 1982; Danforth 1982; Huntingdon and Metcalf 1979; Radcliffe-Brown 1964). Such ethnographical studies have served to underline the social construction of bereavement and the resultant diversity of ritual in different societies, and have also served to reinforce the division between the "outer world" of mourning, and the psychological "inner world" of grief.

Examples can be drawn from recent national and international events to illustrate the difference between the two at a large group collective level. The reaction in England to the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, for instance, is clearly categorisable as an example of public mourning. In whatever way the Diana phenomenon is explained, in terms of social change, reshaping of national identity, new ways of mourning, or media over-exaggeration (Kear and Steinberg 1999; Taylor 2000; Walter 1999b), it is obvious that for most, if not all, of the members of the public who turned out, signed condolence books, left flowers at the palace gates, and wept at the funeral, Diana's death did not cause a shattering of their assumptive worlds, either personal or collective. It signalled no break in the continuity of the English collective narrative, nor appears in retrospect to have had any perceptible effect on the English collective consciousness.

The events of 9/11 in the USA, however, would seem to present a more likely case of collective grief. For many Americans, especially those New Yorkers who witnessed the events, there was a definite rupture of assumed patterns, a breakdown of ontological security, in that never before had the USA suffered an attack by a foreign enemy on civilian targets on its own soil. Certainly, counselling was in great demand in New York post 9/11, from people who were neither escapees from the towers, nor relatives of the victims. And an important part of that counselling process was the telling of personal stories, the reconstruction of disrupted personal narratives (Cohen 2002). Compelling televised coverage of the dramatic incidents served to spread a collective sense of shock and sorrow throughout the USA, and to create a sympathetic community of “virtual” mourners around the world (Walter 2007). Within weeks, the collective American emotional response had turned to outrage, anger and patriotic fervor: the stage was set for the Iraq war (Engle 2007; Smith 2005). Time will ultimately reveal further progress along this particular grief trajectory.

Studies of Grieving Groups

Studies of grief as it affects groups have been few and far between relative to the number dealing with individual grief. Even where a collective unit is in focus, the approach has largely been to view that group as a collection of separate individuals rather than as an aggregate entity in its own right. The emphasis has been on “collected” rather than “collective” grief, to use Olick’s (1999) neat distinction. This section provides an overview of the general trends in research into groups experiencing grief, covering the family, the work-group, the local community, the interest-based community, the ‘first nation’, and the nation.

Families

Studies of families reacting to loss have traditionally concentrated on bereavement situations, although, more recently, examples can be found in

the literature of family reaction to other triggers of grief, including disablement (Lee and Gardner 2010), mental illness (Penzo and Harvey 2008), drug addiction (Oreo and Ozgul 2007), homosexual “coming out” (Martin et al. 2010), unemployment (Hayhoe 2006) and family business failure (Shepherd 2009). Although the focus in such studies has been predominantly on the grief responses of the individual family members involved, there has long been recognition of the fact that the family can also be regarded as an independent unit in its own right. Bowen (1976) talked of the family as a collective whole, and Paul and Grosser (1965) examined the effects of “shared grief” between one generation of a family and the next. Walsh and McGoldrick (1991) were probably the first to adopt a wholeheartedly collective perspective in treating the bereaved family as an interactional system, a functional unit, with “loss rippling out into the extended reachesand down into the next generations” (p. xvii). They underlined the shared adaptational challenges and the changes in group identity and purpose following a family bereavement.

This recognition of the validity of a collective approach has remained a consistent feature in studies of family grief. Byng-Hall (1991) introduced the notion of “family scripts” whereby whole families respond to bereavement with “scripts” inherited from other, previous scenarios, and may find they have to change those scripts to make progress in their grieving. Nadeau (1998) emphasised the importance of “family worlds” in grief, whereby family members interactively make sense of their experience through strategies such as story-telling, comparison-making, and characterization of the deceased. Kissane and Bloch (2002), in their family focused grief therapy, propose cohesiveness, expressiveness, and conflict as determinants of family types, and categorise each family unit they treat on a spectrum from supportive to hostile. Shapiro (2008) underlines the interdependence of family bereavement processes, defining “recovery” from the death of a family member in terms of evolving, interdependent, adaptive responses within the family. Baddeley and Singer (2010), in their reflections on identity reconstruction or maintenance following a loss within the family, refer to the shared set of memories which contribute to the overarching family narrative

as well as to the individual family member's narrative embedded within it. Shepherd (2009), in the context of family grief arising from the loss of a family business, introduces the notion of "emotionally capable" families, with norms and routines for effectively dealing with their grief, somewhat on a par with, but distinct from, the emotional intelligence possessed by individual family members.

Work-Groups

Moving from the family to the business environment, grief theory has also been applied to the work-group, not so much in terms of actual bereavement, although guidance is available to managers on how to handle this in the workplace (Charles-Edwards 2005), but rather in a management studies context in order to explain response to organisational change. Such events as mergers, site closures, business failures, downsizing and restructuring, are characterised as organisational death (Blau 2006, 2007, 2008; Hazen 2008; Marks and Mirvis 2001; Zell 2003), and psychologically-based stage models of grief are employed to describe worker reactions. The Kubler-Ross model of the five stages of dying, for example, is consistently referenced in such studies (Blau 2007; Cunningham 1997; Henderson 1996; Marks and Mirvis 2001; Sutton 1987; Zell 2003).

The focus in these studies is invariably on the individual employee. As Bell and Taylor (2011, p.8) confirm "analyses of organisational grief have focused on how organisation members respond to these events..... Organisational grief is therefore portrayed as an individual level phenomenon". They go on to argue for the equal validity of a collective perspective on organisational grief so that it "can be understood intersubjectively as a shared experience" through an approach that "emphasizes the symbols, language, events, social and cultural experiences of bereavement". However, they provide no examples of such an approach, and none leap out from the management studies literature.

Perhaps Bell and Taylor's assumption that collective grief in the event of

organisational change is a feasible concept needs to be questioned. Although parallels have been drawn between work team and family relationships (Hyde and Thomas 2003; Verity and Jolley 2008), the work-based community, by its very nature a shifting, porous, temporary entity, cannot lay claim to either the same containment or continuity as the family unit. People leave, people join; organisations expand and shrink, relocate and merge, all at an increasingly accelerated twenty-first century pace. Moreover, there are no ties of blood or kinship as serve to bind and bound a family unit. So, to what extent can we talk of a solid collective identity being damaged by organisational change, or of an integrated and unified workforce sharing the painful process of reconstructing that identity? Do all organisations have a collective consciousness? And how many organisations last long enough for change to impact on that?

Certainly, some individuals, particularly those whose personal identities are tightly bound up with their work status, will engage with a personal grief trajectory in the wake of organisational change, but there seems to be little evidence for collective grief in the workplace being similarly triggered. Rather, the stage model of grief appears to have been adopted as a suitable analogy for reaction to organisational change, and as a convenient managerial pseudo-psychological means of controlling that reaction. The aim of research into work group grief in the management studies context is, after all, to enable efficient managerial handling of organisational change and to minimize any negative impact it might have on employee or organisational performance. The emphasis is on control and regulation of employee reaction, the “policing” of grief. And the stage model approach, with its prescriptive emphasis on “normal” grieving and on individual responsibility for working through grief to achieve “recovery”, fits the bill perfectly.

Local Communities

The location-based group can be subject to common loss through natural disasters, accidents or purposeful attacks. Studies of community grief in the wake of such calamities deal with individual responses, either in the

immediate aftermath of the traumatising event or several years later as a follow-up. Post-traumatic stress disorder provides the framework for the bulk of these studies, informing the approach in the cases of accidents such as at Aberfan (Furedi 2002; Johnes 2000; Morgan et al. 2003) and Hillsborough (Sims and Sims 1998; Wright et al. 1994), of natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina (Knapp 2007; Rhoads et al. 2006; Salloum and Overstreet 2008; Salloum et al. 2009) and the South East Asian tsunami (Johannesson et al. 2009; Kristensen et al. 2010; Romano et al. 2006), and of terrorist attacks, including 9/11 in New York (Neria et al. 2007; Shear et al. 2006; Waizer et al. 2005) and the train bombings of 2004 in Madrid (Miguel-Tobal et al. 2007; Val and Linley 2006).

Although Erikson (1976), in his classic work on the destruction of a community in the Buffalo Creek flood, devotes a whole chapter to the “collective trauma” of the flood, what he is essentially dealing with are the reactions of individual survivors. He concludes that most of the traumatic symptoms experienced by the Buffalo Creek survivors are a reaction to the loss of communality as much as to the event itself, since the disaster and its effects would appear to have demolished any collectivity the Buffalo Creek residents might have professed to beforehand. By contrast, Kayser et al. (2008) refer to how the collective context of South Indian society provided mechanisms for coping with shock and grief in the wake of the tsunami. The very fabric of the community, interrelational and interdependent, provided support for and encouraged resilience in individuals dealing with the effects of that disaster.

Even when the collective nature of the local community is acknowledged, the focus remains on the collected individual responses to the shared loss. The individual is naturally the primary concern in disaster situations affecting large numbers of people, where short to medium term assistance is required to cope with the immediate effects. The study of longer term effects on the overall local community may seem less compelling in this context. Moreover, many such communities, certainly in most of the western world, are neither as contained nor as continuous as they once were, given the highly mobile nature of contemporary society and the subsequent distancing of people from

any reality or sense of rooted community (Erikson 1976; Seabrook 2008).

Interest-Based Groups

The collective perspective is far more central to studies of communities whose shared grief is based on common interests, background and type of loss. For example, the mobilised grief of Latin American mothers of the “disappeared” (Holst-Warhaft 2000; Tully 1995; de Volo 2006) or of the Israeli “women in black” (Gabriel 1992) becomes a powerful force for political change in their respective contexts. Similarly, the grief occasioned by AIDS-related losses amongst the gay community in the USA (Nord 1998) is viewed as having provided the solidarity necessary to protest their marginalised and vulnerable role in society (Holst-Warhaft 2000) and to exert political pressure for change.

Such movements harness the potential for agency which is embedded in collective identity (Snow 2001, p.1). A group formed on the basis of shared experience, with shared feelings and perceptions resulting from that experience, is motivated to act together in the pursuit of common interests and goals. The collective identity may emerge from an existent social identity, like mothers or gay men in the examples cited above, its emergence activated by strength of emotion and purpose. And it may be a very temporary affair, the group dissolving back into the larger society once the purpose is fulfilled and the feelings have subsided.

Although the emphasis in such studies is on the collective, it is on the collective power which can be energized by grief, and not on the collective nature of the grief itself. This power can mobilise any size of group confronting shared loss, from small cliques through class or occupational groupings to gender categories or whole nations. And it can coalesce around a variety of factors: dispossession and deprivation of social rights by virtue of class, race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion; material losses of life and land; or less tangible ones of honour and dignity. A variety of social and political movements of the last century, including the Bolshevik

revolution, the rise of Nazi fascism, the struggles of colonial territories to achieve independence, the civil rights movement in the United States, the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa, and the feminist and gay pride movements, can demonstrate the effects of such power unleashed

First Nations

By contrast, studies of “first nation” communities, the indigenous peoples of Australia, New Zealand and North America, deal with grief manifesting as powerlessness. The dispossession of land, culture and identity, suffered as a direct result of genocidal colonisation, triggered a grief which has discernibly transferred from one generation to the next (Seale et al. 2006; Wesley-Esquimaux 2007). Whole communities display an array of social, health and psychological problems regarded as stemming from the original historical trauma. Poor general health, impoverished and sub-standard living conditions, high rates of suicide and violent accident, widespread violence and substance abuse, extensive mental illness, are all taken as indicative of the depressed state of indigenous groups living within the dominant “second nations” (Gracey 1998; Morgan and Freeman 2009; Seale et al. 2006). Alford and Muir (2004, p.101) refer to “the magnitude of indigenous despair and ill-health in Australia”, while Morgan and Freeman (2009, p.85) talk of the history of the Alaskan native people as “a tale of broken families, broken traditions and broken hearts”.

Deprived of self-respect by dint of their substantial losses, these groups display low levels of community and self-esteem, not helped by the inequities they suffer in terms of health care, education provision and employment opportunity. Their grief has effectively been disenfranchised, never fully recognised or acknowledged (Braveheart and De Bruyn 1998). Monture-Angus (2000) talks of “the need for historical honesty” in dealings between dominant cultures and first nation groups. Alford and Muir (2004, p.105) refer to “historical myopia” in Australia, and describe relations between indigenous and non-indigenous populations as being “infused with historical overtones because of the failure of wider society to acknowledge and come to terms

with this history” (citing from the Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islanders Commission, ATSIC, 1999).

Braveheart (2000, 2003, 2005, 2007) defines historical unresolved grief, or historical trauma, as a collective and cumulative emotional wounding across generations. She identifies six phases, from the shock of first contact with the colonisers, through economic competition, conflict, confinement, destruction of culture and family systems, to ultimate designation as second-class, racially inferior members of the dominant colonial society. This collective perspective on the phenomenon is reinforced by the more collected approach of Whitbeck et al. (2004), who, in the tradition of mainstream psychological grief theory, have conducted a longitudinal study of American Indians, measuring their individual historical trauma along a “historical loss associated symptoms scale”, to conclude that the current generation of adults have frequent thoughts about their historical losses, with concomitant negative feelings.

But the overall picture is perhaps not as bleak as painted above. In Australia the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, in 2008 made a historic and generally well-received apology to the aboriginal people, acknowledging their profound grief, suffering and loss at the hands of the non-indigenous Australian people. And Nagel (1996) gives an account of ethnic renewal and resurgence of pride amongst American Indians, citing the rise in population over the last few decades, the greater willingness to profess to Indian ethnicity, and the rise of “red power” as a social movement influenced by the civil rights movement. Her outline of the historical shift in collective self-definition whereby myriad tribes became a unified plurality, and tribal associations turned into pan-Indian consciousness, begs the question as to what part grief, as an energising force, might have had to play in this metamorphosis, given that post-war conditions in the United States provided a climate conducive to such ethnic mobilisation.

Nations

At the level of the largest social grouping, the nation, studies of grief are rare. The Mitscherlichs' (1967/75) examination of Germany's "inability to mourn" following defeat in the second world war and the death of Hitler, argued that the Germans could not resolve their grief over the loss of their dream of Teutonic mastery, and threw themselves into huge efforts of reconstruction in a bid to block out their guilt and shame. Based on interviews with hundreds of Germans, the case is made in terms of psychic energy, ego-depletion and collective denial. Similarly, Lifton's study of the grief-inspired rise of the Nazis, following Germany's humiliating defeat in the first world war and subsequent economic problems (1990), is, like his work on the grief of Hiroshima survivors (1968), psychologically based, explaining historic events in terms of trauma, psychic numbing and states of dissociation. Volkan uses a similar "psychohistory" approach in his analysis of the conflict on his divided native island of Cyprus (1979, 1988), viewing the accumulated losses and accrued griefs of the struggle between the two ethnic groups as feeding the ongoing conflict. In these studies the focus on the individual is unrelenting: a nation is seen as a collected group of citizens. The intergenerational nature of national grief seems to be implicitly recognized, but no real attempt is made to explore the mechanisms of how the transfer is made from one generation to the next.

Some recent studies have approached national grief and trauma with a more collective orientation. Faust's "Republic of Suffering" (2008), for example, aims to show how the shared loss and grief of the American civil war served to shape subsequent national structures and commitments. The way in which the trauma of this war revolutionised the military's approach to caring for the dead and their families is clearly demonstrated, but any case for the war's permanent transformation of American beliefs, values or character, or for any substantial reconstruction of the national narrative, is less convincingly made.

The refashioning of national narratives in the wake of loss is the theme of Schivelbush's (2003) historical study of reaction to military defeat in the cases of the collapse of the Confederacy at the end of the American civil war,

the defeat of France by Prussia in 1871, and the victory of the allies over Germany in 1918. He shows how blame in each instance was collectively shifted away from themselves by the defeated group, who thereby translated defeat into victory. This creation of myth as a collective means for coming to terms with defeat is described in general terms of mass psychology surrounding a specific event, however, with little detail on how the myth enters collective memory or on what sort of longer term consequences it might have for subsequent national history.

Neal's (1998) examination of traumatic events affecting America in the twentieth century is set in a promising theoretical framework of national trauma as social disruption, necessitating subsequent discourse directed at repair, and impacting on collective memory. Detailed accounts of the Great Depression, Pearl Harbour, the Cuba missile crisis, the assassinations of J.F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, and the Vietnam War, amongst others, are accompanied by discussion of the criteria which render an event traumatic. But, again, there is little consideration of how such events are collectively internalised by the culture, or of how the collective sadness, fear and anger expressed in their wake differs from these emotions experienced individually. It is not, perhaps, enough to draw a general analogy between individual and collective trauma, the sole difference lying in the "shared-ness" of the latter.

This review of the literature on grief as it affects groups throws up several issues. Firstly, it is clear that grief has enormous power at a collective level: it can disrupt and depress; equally, it can create and energise. But it has these effects at an individual level too, and the focus of this chapter is on establishing grief as a collective phenomenon, not on further exploring the various properties of the grieving experience. Collective grief certainly comes across as a reality at the family level, and in the case of "first nation" groups, but does not appear to have the same validity in local communities struck by disaster, or in workgroups affected by change, both of which are treated as collected groups of grieving individuals rather than as collectives in their own right. This is understandable in view of the fact that most such groups based

on location are, by virtue of the nature of fast-changing, ever-moving contemporary western society, temporary and shifting entities. Families, along with those “first nation” groups artificially contained within the dominant culture, have clearer boundaries which persist with greater continuity in time. They both, in addition, are internally bound by common blood or kinship links.

The nation presents a more ambiguous picture. Earlier studies approached national grief from an individual, psychologically-based, collected perspective. More recent studies refer to the collective nature and consequences of national reaction to loss, but in often superficial broad brush strokes which raise more questions than they provide answers. How exactly does grief operate within a nation? What does it mean to talk about collective emotion and myth-making at a national level? What binds a nation internally? A nation may demonstrate continuity through its history, but how does the idea of national containment sit in a contemporary globalised context? The remainder of this chapter attempts to tease out answers to these questions and to explore the feasibility of collective national grief as a concept.

The Nation

Modernist and Perennialist Perspectives

Preceded by tribes and by empires, the nation as a form of large-scale social grouping is presented by some theorists as a relatively recent phenomenon. The modernist approach to defining the nation views nationalism, a movement which began in Europe in the eighteenth century and proved so successful that the world is now, some three centuries later, composed entirely of nations, as a process operating in tandem with the contemporaneous key processes of modernity, namely, industrialisation and capitalism. Gellner (1983) regards nationalism as an essentially political principle “which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent” (p.1), its rise marking a phase of human development between the agrarian and industrial orders, essential to the efficient functioning of the latter. A modern economy needed a uniform culture, achieved by the

fabrication of nations which served to integrate societies that were highly differentiated socially, culturally and institutionally.

Maintaining an emphasis on the political aspects of nation-formation, Hobsbawm (1983), a Marxist historian, considers the nation a thoroughly modern invention, an illusion utilized in the service of class interests for economic and political ends. He sees the nation-state as providing a setting for individual lives, the course of which it largely determines. Althusser (1971), a Marxist philosopher, supports this view with his theory of “ideological state apparatuses”, the mechanisms whereby these lives are so determined, and which include the family, the media, religious organisations and the education system.

Giddens (1985) also underlines the elements of political and administrative control in his definition of nationalism as an “affiliation of individuals to a set of symbols and beliefs emphasizing communality among the members of a political order” (p.116). He points out that only within modern nations does the administrative scope of the state apparatus correspond directly with territorial boundaries (p. 18). While regarding the nation as a modern phenomenon stemming from the aftermath of the French revolution, he acknowledges that European nationalism is perhaps to be categorized in a class of its own and that theories based on it are not readily generalisable elsewhere (1981).

Another school of thought contends that nations are not mere inventions of the modern era, but have their roots in pre-modern ethnic groups. Armstrong (1982) posits the existence of nations, in the sense of people sharing an ethnic identity, prior to nationalism, the movement which created ethnic boundaries around these peoples. Focusing on Europe and the Islamic Mediterranean, he argues that the rise of nations and the territorialisation of identity can be traced to pre-modern secular and religious developments in these regions. Smith (1986, 1999) also sees medieval and ancient communities as providing a springboard for modern nations. He contends that ethnic communities developed into nations through “a heightened sense of collective distinctiveness and mission” (1999, p.130). Myth-making

enabled the establishment of a collective consciousness and identity, a joint purpose for the group, and nationalism served both to strengthen existing myths and initiate new ones. Without such an “inherited store” of myths, memories, customs and symbols from the original ethnic community, Smith sees no basis for the founding of a nation. In his definition (1999, p.104) a nation is “A named cultural unit of population with a separate homeland, shared ancestry myths and memories, a public culture, common economy, and common legal rights and duties for all members”. This perennialist approach, which stresses cultural continuity and developmental process, regards modern nationalism as part of a long cycle of ethnic consciousness.

Imagined Community

By contrast, Anderson’s (1991) distinctly modernist perspective on the nation as “an imagined political community” sees it as a socially constructed cultural artefact emerging in response to and as a definitive break from the past. In Anderson’s view, as those large cultural systems based on religious faith and dynastic hierarchies, which had previously provided security, began to decline, membership of the nation, with its clear boundaries and inherent sovereignty, provided an alternative form of security, akin to that of belonging to a large, extended family. In addition, concepts of time began to change to a more linear, serial mode, as evidenced in the continuity integral to the new literary forms of the novel and the newspaper. The nation could thus be conceptualised as a “solid community, moving steadily down history” (p.26) and, thanks to the rise of the printed word, this conceptualisation could be shared by people who had never met, yet were confident of their community in “a deep, horizontal comradeship” (p.6).

The phrase “imagined community” has proved sufficiently seductive as to have become ubiquitous in academic discussion of nations and nationalism. However, Anderson’s theories have not been so well received in themselves. He has been criticized (Breuilly 1996; Chatterjee 1993; Smith 1991) for neglecting the importance of the ethnic and the political aspects of nation formation, and for presenting an over-ambitious theoretical generalisation in

both historical and geopolitical terms. His major contribution should perhaps be considered as lying in the description of how nationhood is brought into being, of what preconditions increase the potential for the creation of a sense of national belonging, and of how modern communications developments have enabled the widespread sharing of collective national identity.

Billig's (1995) concept of "banal nationalism" adds to this perspective of the nation from the angle of collective identity. The endless, routine reproduction of national values, assumptions and symbols leads to their becoming taken-for-granted elements of everyday living, operating beyond the level of conscious awareness. National identity thus becomes embodied in the habits of social life, going unquestioned and unchallenged, and provides a background against which individual identities are constructed. This essentially performative view of nationhood is echoed in the work of post-colonial theorists like Bhabha (1990) and Chatterjee (1993), who underline the lack of homogeneity in most third world nations, arguing that their national identities are negotiated through a contestation of dominant and minority discourses, and that national narratives are constructions emerging from the hybrid interaction of contending cultural constituencies within the nation.

Multiculturalism, Globalism and Territorialism

Multiculturalism poses a challenge to "the daily plebiscite" (Renan 1882/1990, p.19) which is the negotiated and agreed foundation of any nation, and much multiculturalist policy is specifically devised to accommodate the assimilation and absorption of immigrants into the dominant national framework (Kymlicka 1997; Sabbagh 2004). Parekh (1999) cautions against attempts to define national identity in a multicultural society, since there will always be a dominant group which seeks primary identification with the country and adoption of its own identity as national. He sees the delinking of ethnicity and citizenship as the critical precondition for the accommodation of multiculturalism within the national mainstream. In the United States, as Walzer (1992) points out, the challenge of rendering nationalism and

multiculturalism more compatible has been met through the creation of “hyphenated Americans”, who retain a cultural, ethnic identity while professing a political, civic allegiance to the state.

Appadurai (1996) looks to a deterritorialised “postnational” world in which cultural hybridisation is the norm, and where the twin forces of media and migration create global flows and cascades of people and of images. But globalisation does not seem likely to render notions of nationalism redundant quite yet. If there is an inbuilt tension between the idea of the “global village” with its different members pursuing their own interests, and the aspiration to “one world values” (Day and Thompson 2004), the reactions to the economic crises arising at the end of the first decade of the twenty first century have, if anything, emphasized the former. And although there is an increasing flow of social relations across national borders in our Jihad versus MacWorld (Barber 1996) times, resulting in a growing membership of international communities of sentiment or interest, the nation appears likely to remain a remarkably resilient category of identity for the foreseeable future.

Whereas Marx regarded class as the major social category, dismissing the nation as ephemeral and insubstantial, Deutsch (1967, p.217) sums up the case for the nation’s enduring success: “the nation-state offers most of its members a stronger sense of security, belonging or affiliation, and even personal identity, than does any alternative large group”. Even Appadurai (1996), arguing for recognition of a new relationship between subjectivity, location, political identification and social imagination as a result of the forces of globalisation, acknowledges that national identity, if not the physical nation-state, still has a strong enough grip on the imagination to inhibit the ability to think beyond the nation.

For Grosby (1995), there is no such clear distinction between the physical and the imagined. He views territoriality as a fundamental feature of all human societies, the territory which is perceived as one’s “own” being life-sustaining in biological terms through the provision of the necessary physical nutrients, and also in mental, emotional and spiritual terms “by providing the locus for those memories and psychic patterns necessary for the ordering of

life" (p. 158). The territory which makes up a homeland and provides the base for a nation is not simply a delineated space, but is equally the "transcendental significance of that space", the meaningful and temporally deep structure it represents for the individual and the collective living there (p.149). Citing medievalist Susan Reynolds (p.154) in her observations that words like "populus", "natio" and "gens" were used just as approximately in the middle ages as their equivalents "people" and "nation" are today to refer to "a community of custom, descent and government", Grosby counters the mainstream modernist theories with a perspective on territorialised identity as incorporating a historically persistent primordial pattern of attachment to a structure more extensive than that of family or locality.

Defining the Nation

This brief overview of some of the theories on nations and nationalism reflects the wide debate surrounding the topic, centring not only on definition of the terms, but also on when nations first appeared and on how they developed prior to their debut on the world stage. To enter into this debate is neither necessary nor justifiable in the context of this dissertation, where no single definition as given above will suffice, but all definitions are regarded as offering some pertinent perspectives or elements of relevance. If this approach risks the charge of imprecision as levelled at both medieval commentators and contemporary theorists on the nation, it also provides for recognition of the multidimensional complexity contained within the concept.

A nation, for the purposes of this dissertation, is taken as a group of people which both views itself and is viewed as collectively sharing a common set of parameters, at once physical, cultural and political. Territory and boundaries; symbols, myths and memories; ideological frameworks, economic structures and legal systems; ethnicity and citizenship, are all important constituents of nationhood, though perhaps not all equally nor simultaneously, with varying salience across different nations and at different points in time. A nation can be a state, but the two do not always coincide, either spatially or temporally, and the latter has to be viewed as a legal and political concept rather than in

terms of social community (Tivey 1980).

An essential feature of nationhood highlighted in the arguments that follow is its dynamic, ongoing nature as a collective project created, maintained and negotiated through the participation and interaction of its members. At the heart of this process is the symbiotic relationship between the individual and the group: the collective national consciousness and the overall collective identity manifest through individual members of the nation who, in their turn, nurture, modify or recast these overarching phenomena, and so on, from one generation to another. In addition, a prerequisite for the nation, as a category of identity which, like that of the individual, is based on difference and alterity, is the existence of other nations, providing an international framework, a global context in which individual nations themselves participate and interact.

The Grieving Nation

Taking the characterisation of the nation outlined above together with the description of grief laid out in the first chapter, can sense be made of the concept of a grieving nation? A nation suffers a significant loss, as a result of an event such as war, genocide or occupation. Whatever individual losses of bereavement or destruction are incurred by the nation's members in the course of the relevant event, there is shared loss at the level of collective national identity. For example, the security promised by membership of the nation is no longer to be taken for granted in a situation of conflict and defeat; the dignity involved in exercising what have hitherto been considered normal rights of citizenship evaporates under foreign occupation; the assumed affiliation of nationhood becomes illusory in genocidal civil war. Expectations are shattered, assumptions questioned.

The resultant grief impacts strongly on the immediately affected generation, colouring the collective national identity which is so basic to and so intertwined with personal identity. Through everyday interaction in the family and the workplace, through the media, through legal and administrative processes, this grief manifests and permeates society, entering the collective

consciousness of the nation. It is then transferred to the next generation, communicated through the words of school history books and family conversations, through the images seen in films and on view in museums and exhibitions, through television programmes and newspaper articles, through attitudes, moods and body language, through prejudices, taboos and resentments. For the grief has now become a major component of overall national identity, a part of the nation's assumptive world, absorbed by the next generation as they are brought up within the framework of the nation's institutions. And so the cycle goes on, the grief becoming interwoven with the newly reconstructed national narrative, and, from that essential background against which all personal narratives play out, with the individual narratives of all the nation's members.

The trajectory of a nation's grief crosses generations, unfolding in its own unique and particular way, with efforts to adapt and adjust, or with continued lamentations over loss. Nor does this take place in a vacuum: membership of the global village locates the grieving nation in a network of relationships with other nations. In the same way as the individual grieves within a social context, the nation grieves within an international one. And the way in which any particular nation deals with its grief, in terms of rebuilding identity and reconstructing the national narrative in order to accommodate its loss, will have an effect on its interaction with other nations, and will also be affected by that interaction. Consequences are bound to flow, in both directions.

The concept of nation appears to provide for the conditions which render the grief experience feasible: susceptibility to loss, mechanisms which ensure continuity in time, and containment as a limited, discrete unit existing in a dynamic context of interaction with similar units. But can the fundamentals of grief as outlined in the first chapter, namely: the grief-triggering loss; the emotional response; the attempt to make sense of the post-loss world; and the specific context and its influence on the shaping of the ensuing consequences, be regarded as applicable at a national level? And if they can, how do these fundamentals manifest both nationally and internationally?

National Loss

Grief-triggering losses affecting national identity seem to occur in relatively specific situations, a few of which are touched on above. In conflict contexts, defeat, along with the material losses entailed, brings about loss of pride, loss of confidence, loss of a particular national vision for the future. Germany's defeat in the first world war, and even more humiliatingly in the second, provide illustration, as does the surrender of Japan after the atomic bombings at the end of the second world war. Occupation by a foreign power means loss of autonomy and independence, the underpinnings of both national and personal identity. The Chinese occupation of Tibet, the Israeli occupation of Gaza and the West Bank, and the occupation of Iraq by the United States and its allies, are all recent examples. Cases of genocide, as in the Jewish holocaust, the Cambodian and Rwandan civil wars, and the ethnic conflict in Sudan, involve loss of any perception of self-value and security in terms of having a place in the world, along with loss of trust in fellow-humanity. Partition, as experienced on the Indian sub-continent, and in other parts of the world where lines drawn by colonial powers through the middle of homogeneous tribal and ethnic territories necessitated the mass movements of people, results in loss of land and home, along with a loss of any sense of belonging or of autonomy in determining the future.

All these scenarios entail radical damage to collective self-image, and a dispossession of fundamental elements of collective self-identity. They involve the undermining of the basic sense of ontological security that membership of a nation can provide: Volkan's (1999) "big tent" of nationhood fails to provide the taken-for-granted protection, or compatriots prove signally lacking in any assumed affiliation. Moreover, lack of agency or powerlessness is characteristic of the national loss experience, while causative agency is attributable elsewhere: someone else is held responsible. The sense of impotence and insecurity created by natural disasters does not appear to present as significant a loss as that perceived to be caused by another nation or group (Van der Veer 1998; Zinner and Williams 1999). It is the breakdown of expectations of the social order, the rupture of assumptions of social cohesiveness resultant from the

intentionality of others, whether viewed as a betrayal of trust (Edkins 2003) or as the issue of relationship to a destructive social world (Fierke 2007), that appears to inspire grief at a national level. Although grief-triggering loss, for the nation as for the individual, is fundamentally concerned with the web of social meanings underlying existence, with changes in the way of relating to self and others, the issue of agency would appear to play a more crucial role at the national level.

National Emotional Response

In world politics, “emotion is implicit and ubiquitous, but undertheorised” (Crawford 2000, p.118). The tendency to ignore the role of emotion in international affairs can be seen as resulting from a long tradition in modernity of separating emotion from rationality (Elster 1999), the former viewed as dangerously countering the ability to make rational and ethical judgements, causing confusion, and leading to impulsive, violent acts; the latter assumed as fundamental to justice and effective, cool-headed, decision-making. The actions of nation-states in a modern, liberal, democratic world have therefore to be seen to be based on rational considerations. Increasingly, however, the significance of emotions in global politics is being recognised. Lebow (2005) argues that emotions are central to world politics, and that reason and emotion are not as mutually exclusive in this sphere as has previously been assumed. Mercer (2005, 2006, 2010) echoes these themes and criticises the academic enthusiasm for purging emotion from explanations of international affairs. Bleiker and Hutchison (2007, 2008a) lament the lack of research into the role of emotion in global affairs, arguing the need to accept that such research “can be insightful and valid even if it engages unobservable phenomena, and even if the results of such inquiries can neither be measured nor validated empirically” (2007, p.4).

Collective emotion is a dimension of the relations between groups, arising from their evaluatively charged interactions. Where group membership is a fundamental component of self-identity, the individual strongly identifying with a group, collective emotions can be elicited through intergroup interactions in

the same way as individual emotions are through interpersonal interactions. Independent of personal outcome, any event or situation perceived as threatening or advancing the group's interests, will give rise to an emotional response: "Even when the self has clearly played no causal role in an event, depending on the meaning that event has for a valued social identity, differential emotional reactions can occur" (Branscombe and Miron 2004, p. 314). Resentment, for example, based on a perception of undeserved advantage, is traditionally associated with relations between class groupings in society (Barbalet 1998). Collective shame or anger emerges in response to intergroup prejudice or discrimination (Kaiser and Major 2004). Collective guilt is elicited when a group is confronted with and acknowledges the illegitimacy of its own negative actions towards another group (Branscombe and Miron 2004). The collective *schadenfreude* which arises from intergroup envy can create a climate in which more direct aggression is tolerated (Spears and Leach 2004), as, for example, in the case of Europe's Jews in the early twentieth century, or of the educated classes of Cambodia in the mid-twentieth century.

Collective emotions play a significant role within the structural relations of power and status characterising the global political scene, both as consequences of foreign policy situations and as triggers of policy-making behaviour (Alexieva 2008). International interactions throw up events or situations which are variously interpreted as either threatening or advancing what are perceived to be the interests or concerns of the respective nations involved, and emotions are elicited in the course of these appraisal-laden interplays. The specific assessments of potential threat or benefit arising from any particular situation, and the judgements on where the national interests lie, are, of course, open to negotiation and contestation, to strategic political or ideological manipulation, within any given interaction (Aaltola 2009; Ahmed 2004; Bleiker and Hutchison 2008b; Butler 2009; Fattah and Fierke 2009; Moisi 2007, 2009; Saurette 2006).

Various mechanisms have been proposed to explain how emotion is shared by a group: emotional contagion, the automatic and unconscious "catching" of emotions from others, through mimicry, synchronisation and feedback in

everyday interaction, (Hatfield and Rapson 2004); emotional convergence, the tendency to modulate emotions to match and coincide with others, thus forming closer relationships with stronger bonds (Anderson and Keltner 2004); and, in the context of traumatic events, a process of dissemination whereby the immediately affected “carrier group” communicates their feelings to the rest, until the entire collective is participating in the trauma discourse (Alexander 2004a). In these various ways, emotion can pervade the group, leading to the creation of an overall collective emotional climate.

Ross (2006) views emotions as belonging strictly neither to the individual nor the collective, but existing as strata of the constructed self alongside memories, habits and beliefs. His description of the American response to 9/11 as “a synthetic process that crystallised a variety of memories and emotional states into a public mood... conducive to militarist response” (p.213), implies an affective aspect to collective consciousness that is available for mobilisation in reaction to events, enabling the combining of pre-existent affect with contemporary response. This is not inconsistent with De Rivera et al.’s (2007, p.255) definition of emotional climate as “a social construction created by people in the ways that they interact with one another”, brought into being by feelings filtered through a society’s emotional conventions, and grounded in the ways in which that particular society regulates the expression of emotion.

There will be variation in contribution to and experience of any collective emotion: “An emotional climate is not a blanket which equally covers each member of the group associated with it” (Barbalet 1998, p.160). And a distinction between emotional climate and emotional atmosphere can be made, based on the gravity of the event eliciting the emotion: “If the event has lasting consequences, emotional conventions can affect the emotional climate of a society. If not, the event produces short- or medium-term emotional atmospheres” (Fernandez-Dols et al. 2007, p.342).

On the basis of the above, emotional response would seem to be feasibly attributable to nations, although not in terms of direct emotions as they are understood to be felt by individuals. There is clear academic support for the

significance of emotion at an international level, and for the recognition of collective emotional reaction, variously conceptualised as an overall emotional climate arising from the collected emotions of the nation's individual members; or in terms of the mobilisation of emotional energies derived from an affective component of collective consciousness; or, reflecting the inherent complexity of the phenomenon, some mixture of the two.

Making Sense of Loss: National Meaning-Making and Memory

The stories nations tell about themselves answer questions of identity and purpose at a collective level in the same way as personal narratives do at an individual level. And collective memory, the memory shared by the nation's members, constructed and passed on by the group, is essential to the national narrative creation process. Halbwachs (1925/1992) argues that human memory can only function within a collective context since people are always operating in a social arena. Consequently, collective memory is selective, dependent on the particular social perspective of the group doing the remembering. Thus memory functions as a mechanism of social differentiation among groups, and leads to the formation of distinct "communities of memory" (Bellah et al. 1985; Wood 1999).

For Halbwachs, collective memory is a social framework onto which all personal recollections of past events are woven. History is what would be left after all the social layers were removed from these individual accounts. He argues that the selective reconstruction and appropriation or discarding of parts of the past that collective memory involves, always respond to the needs of the present. Such exploitation of the past by the present, the mobilisation of memory for contemporary purposes, can be illustrated by the American Jewish use of the holocaust to silence critics of Israel (Chomsky 1988); or by the late twentieth century burst of academic interest in and commemorative activities around the Irish famine, an event previously remembered only in folklore until the recent reinvention of Irish identity (Gray 2004).

Halbwachs defines collective memory, but leaves it to others to elaborate on the mechanisms whereby it is transmitted from one generation to the next, always up for renegotiation, sustaining social solidarity yet simultaneously contestable and containing the potential for conflict (Bell 2006). Nora's (1984-92) comprehensive cataloguing of "lieux de memoire" lists numerous symbolic sites or realms which powerfully evoke a set of values that configure the nation and draw its citizens together in social collectivity. These sites, "where memory crystallises and secretes itself" (1989, p.7), and which include institutions, texts, flags, commemorative events, national heritage locations, and specific dates for celebration, represent the shared meanings and values fundamental to national identity. They act as temporal conduits by operating as signifiers: one generation invests them with meaning, and the next can interpret them as they will, or even discard them and establish new sites with new meanings.

Connerton (1989) proposes the centrality of "acts of transfer" to the intergenerational transmission of collective memory. These are essentially communicative acts between different groups in society, and comprise narratives, commemorative ceremonies and rituals, and bodily practices such as posture and gesture. He regards museums, libraries and academies as the store-rooms of collective memory, but stresses the vital role of dynamic acts in conveying and sustaining that memory. Numerous means are cited by various theorists for this active transmission of collective memory: war memorials and commemorations; film, visual art, literature and poetry; educational textbooks and official histories; popular culture and tourist sites (Eley 2008; Tal 1996; Winter 1995). Moreover, Cushman (1995) observes, in the context of trauma, how patterns of interaction, particular configurations of self-other relationships, are passed on intergenerationally.

By means of this apparatus for remembering and forgetting, one generation of a nation ensures the continuity of the national narrative by transmitting its memories to the next, the transfer effected by a process of communication in which "collective memory is a representation of the past embodied in both commemorative symbolism and historical evidence" (Schwartz 1997, p.471). Within this communicative context, history can be seen as a system of

referential symbols and commemoration as a system of condensation symbols (Sapir 1934), expressing moral sentiments inspired by historic events. Thus history disenchants the past while commemoration re-enchants it, although the latter is always kept within bounds by the former.

When a nation suffers identity-damaging loss, through “critical events” which distort the national narrative (Das 1995), or trauma which undermines the collective sense of stability and creates perceptions of danger, chaos and crisis (Neal 1998), it has to make sense of the situation. The national narrative must be reconstructed to accommodate the new knowledge the nation’s members have gained about themselves, their values, their social integrity, their capacity for violence or vulnerability to harm, their assumptions and beliefs (Gray and Oliver 2004, pp. 1-12). Usable pasts, into which this new knowledge can be integrated, or from which it can be omitted, are created by governments, opinion formers and political elites, and enter into the collective memory.

This process can be illustrated by the ways in which various European countries re-established their identities in the aftermath of the second world war. East Germany, for example, completely forgot the holocaust. By dismissing it as the product of the workings of capitalist forces, any responsibility was sloughed off and neatly shifted westwards over the border (Giesen 2004; Smelser 2004). Austria, meanwhile, positioned itself as a liberated country, laying the blame for the past at the doors of its occupiers (Giesen 2004). France, which had succumbed to German occupation in a matter of weeks, and, on liberation, had to cope with a history of collaboration and profiteering, blacked out those negative factors with visions of a united resistance which entered into the collective memory and remained there unquestioned for the next thirty years (Kitson 2008). In addition, the Allies’ immediate post-war concerns did not include recognising the holocaust as such (Alexander 2004b): Dimbleby’s radio broadcast from a liberated Belsen was censored so that no reference was made to the Jewishness of the inmates (Kushner 2008); at Nuremberg there was no specific reference to the Jews (Bloxxham 2008); and the camps of Aktion Reinhard, unambiguous Jewish extermination facilities, received little publicity by contrast to the

concentration camps of Belsen and Auschwitz (Bloxham 2004).

Tal (1996) outlines three strategies employed for collective meaning-making in the re-establishment of national identity and reconstruction of the national narrative after trauma: mythologisation, medicalisation and disappearance. The first, involving narratives of redemption, rescue and conquest, is seen in the romantic myth of heroic sacrifice constructed to account for the enormous number of British military deaths in the first world war (Winter 1995); and in the justification of the invasion and occupation of Iraq by the United States and its allies as a necessary step in the rescue of the Iraqi people from oppressive dictatorship (Edkins 2003). The second, involving a process of rehabilitation and return to “normal” life, features in American reaction to the Vietnam War, in the aftermath of which the post-traumatic stress syndrome diagnosis of veterans sought to medicalise their experiences away (Tal 1996); and in the huge programme of trauma therapy run during and after the war in Yugoslavia by organisations like Doctors without Borders (Richters 1998). Tal’s third strategy, entailing a refusal to acknowledge the existence of events or their effects, is exemplified by the Japanese blocking out of uncomfortable facts like the Nanking massacre or the comfort women (Black 2008, p.16); and by the Turkish refusal to countenance any notion of a state-sponsored Armenian massacre (Giesen 2004, p.151; Hovannisian 1999).

Edkins (2003) argues that producing any sort of narrative is in itself a form of forgetting, since narrative obscures, conceals and domesticates the actual experiences it sets out to recount. Hence silence is the norm in the immediate aftermath of identity-damaging events. But the need to make meaning, to produce a usable past for the collective national memory, is urgent, since “when memory is not in question, neither is identity” (Lambek and Antze 1996, p. xxii), and functional existence without identity is dangerously vulnerable to external influence and manipulation, let alone being a questionable concept in its own terms.

In any nation, those in power will always try to construct a narrative of the past legitimising their own authority, but they are not the only ones engaged in remembering and forgetting. The struggle over memory, the politically

motivated competition for the dominant discourse in the reconstruction of the national narrative, can result in a lengthy process of collective groping, negotiation and contestation before a definitive response is established. Even then, this response will be subject to revision over time as events once deemed as having major impact are forgotten in the foregrounding of newer experiences, and as pressing requirements for fresh usable pasts arise to meet the needs of the next generation (Mannheim 1952).

International Context and Consequences

In the same way as the individual is located in a social context by categories like gender, age, class and ethnicity, indicating relationship to other members of society, the nation is defined by categories which establish its status in the global order and reveal its differences from and similarities to other members of the international community. Nations can be categorised according to size, population, wealth, and economic, technological or industrial achievement. Global organisations like the United Nations employ a variety of economic and governance classification indicators, including levels of income production, human and economic development; human rights records and degree of press freedom; status of democratic processes and institutions, and levels of transparency and corruption. Nations can also be identified in terms of cultural values (www.worldvaluessurvey.org), or in terms of dependency and exploitation (Wallerstein 1987).

Being a nation in the global community implies positioning and engagement in a network of international relationships. The basis for these collaborations can be economic, as with membership of the G8 or the G20, or of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (www.opec.org); regional, as with ASEAN (the Association of South East Asian Nations), the OAU (Organisation for African Unity) or ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States); or security-oriented, as in the case of NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, or ECOMOG, the intervention force which grew out of ECOWAS.

When any nation suffers significant loss, the subsequent repairing of identity and reconstruction of national narrative does not take place in isolation, but in a dynamic context of interaction and interrelationship with other nations. The nation, like the individual, does not meet loss empty-handed, but comes to the experience with its own distinctive history and identity, developed and established within this international context. This suggests that the axiom that who we are dictates how we grieve might have some validity at an international level. Certainly, nations which perceive or wish to perceive themselves as strong, appear to adopt a hard, problem-solving, action-oriented response in grief. The American reaction to 9/11 in terms of an anger and hatred that found an outlet in the Iraq war has already been mentioned above. The “iron fist” policies of Israel, the Jewish nation which, in order to survive, had to differentiate itself from the victim status of the holocaust Jews, also demonstrates the point. By contrast, a weaker nation might seem unable to reconstruct its post-loss narrative, consistently harking back to the pre-loss past. In Cambodia, for example, there is a lack of official history dealing with the recent past, perhaps reflecting a preference to revert to the glories of the centuries old Khmer kingdom and forget more unsettling up-to-date events.

Post-loss, the grief trajectory of the nation will be influenced by the ongoing interaction of the global context, and may well have an effect on it in turn. In many instances, the international reaction is one of ignoring loss and disenfranchising the grief. As already mentioned, the Jewish nation’s loss in the holocaust was not immediately recognised at the end of the second world war, but only some years later as a result of pressure from the American Jewish pro-Israeli lobby. The realisation that the humiliating losses endured by Germany after the first world war were largely responsible for the rise of Nazism and Germany's expansive ambitions in the thirties, came too late to prevent a second world war. The nakba of 1948, where Palestinians lost their homeland to the creation of the Jewish state, though recognised as a loss by the Arab world and many African and Asian nations, has remained largely unacknowledged in the west.

In some cases, of course, self-disenfranchisement of grief may be in

operation, with shame acting as a self-regulator (Kauffman 2002). Given that so much pride comes from national identity, it seems appropriate that shame should function at this level too, and such collective disallowing of grief might explain phenomena like Germany's "inability to mourn" after 1945, or Cambodia's insistence that theirs is not a traumatised nation in the aftermath of their killing fields. Pride, dignity and the saving of face may play a larger part in the self-policing of national grief than they do in western theoretical models of individual grief.

For admitting to grief and accepting support has a price. As Fierke (2007, p.9) observes, "International responses to violence or suffering tend to assume a responsibility to 'fix' problems". The "fixer" comes from a position of strength, and the support available to a grieving nation is normally in the form of western style therapies which require it to comply with the role of the "needing to be fixed". Post-traumatic stress counsellors are sent in to medicalise problems away, since "The impact of responses to death and trauma, ignored in political settlements of social violence, can cause further damage to survivors and prejudice lasting peace" (Simpson 1997, p.5). Although practical help can often serve more purpose than psychiatric counselling (Giller 1998) by helping to mend the social fabric of the community, which will have its own time-honoured ways of supporting individuals (Summerfield 1998), the truth and reconciliation processes, the legal proceedings and court cases are set in motion. These ostensibly offer psychological closure, but also perform the function of re-presenting the past and creating a narrative from it, moving the situation on. The international organisations swing into action with their various agendas, resourcing and restructuring the grieving nation to enable it to return to normal functioning as a member of the global community.

The only option to this fixer-sanctioned return to a culture of normality would seem to be the downward spiral to failed state or economic basket case status, even to oblivion or ultimate disappearance as a nation. And although the empowerment of the injured through legitimised grievance has led to the rise of a new international politics of grievance (Black 2008), in which grief might be seen as providing an opportunity for rebalancing global power

structures, in reality it changes nothing. It simply means that with regard to roles like fixed and fixer, injured and injuring, which become established as social positions and rooted in national identities (Brown 1995), the injured and needing to be fixed now have a vested interest in maintaining these positions. Grief appears to be well regulated and efficiently policed for maintenance of the status quo in the global community.

Summary

The aim of this chapter has been to shift grief from its traditional domain of the individual to that of the collective, more specifically, to that of the nation. After a consideration of the relationship between the individual and the collective, and the ways in which that relationship has been theoretically conceptualised, various studies of grief as it affects groups were reviewed. Whereas collective grief, affecting the group as a whole, is recognised in family and first nation group studies, work-groups and local communities, by contrast, lend themselves more to an individual-member-oriented, collected grief perspective. The nation too, though displaying the same properties of continuity and containment as family and first nation groups, has been approached largely in terms of the collected grief of its members in the wake of loss, with little more than lip-service paid to any collective aspects of the phenomenon.

In seeking to establish any feasibility for collective national grief as a meaningful concept, various definitions and descriptions of nation and nationhood were examined, and an exploration undertaken of how the fundamentals of grief, as outlined in the first chapter, might apply collectively to the nation, as characterised in this one. The best way of ascertaining whether nations grieve, however, is through a detailed study of an actual nation undergoing and reacting to significant, identity-damaging loss. The next chapter will set out the strategy for just such an undertaking, detailing the design and methodology for an investigative exploration of the behaviour of two particular nations in the wake of loss.

3. TRACING THE CONTOURS OF NATIONAL GRIEF: METHODOLOGY

“The function of research is not necessarily to map and conquer the world but to sophisticate the beholding of it”.

(Stake 1995, p. 43)

The first chapter considered the nature of grief, expanding it from the traditional context of bereavement to a wider variety of identity-damaging experiences of loss, while keeping it within the domain of the individual. The second chapter sought to shift grief from that domain, examining its feasibility as a collective phenomenon, in particular at a national level. This third chapter sets the scene for a “plausibility probe” (George and Bennett 2004) into national grief, laying out a research design for the gathering of empirical evidence which might go some way towards answering the question of whether nations grieve or not, in terms of the definitions of grief and of nation as outlined in the preceding chapters.

The research exercise involves capturing data from both national history and national identity. Since the narrative of the events in a people’s past, their national history, cannot be divorced from the narrative they tell themselves about who they are in the present, their national identity, the two are inextricably intertwined and mutually defining. And although the events of history might appear to qualify as “facts”, and as such lend themselves to an “objective” positivist approach; while the features of identity would seem to gravitate more toward the realm of “values” or “feelings”, stemming from subjective perceptions of the world (Taylor and Bogdan 1984, pp. 1-2), this is not the place for a debate on the nature of “reality” as either a given to be known, or a construction to be interpreted. Realism and idealism, as Seale (1999) suggests, are philosophical positions best understood as resources for thinking about a problem, and that is how they will be applied in the design of this research.

The approach to the data will be determined by a framework of grief theory, but applied in as flexible a way as possible. An exercise in strict pattern-

matching involving an attempt to reconcile a template for the elements of the grief experience with events of national history and characteristics of national identity, can imply a degree of rigidity. But an engagement with pattern-comparison, involving a grief-oriented perspective on the national trajectory through history, can lead to a fruitful dialogue between the latter and grief theory, with a view to exploring how, if at all, each might illuminate the other. And an examination of current national identity, approached as a fluid and evolving process of negotiation rather than a static attribute, with a view to ascertaining the presence of any discernible traces of the grief experience amongst its features, can serve as a check on the findings which result from this comparing of patterns.

The chapter goes on to provide a comprehensive description of the overall research design, with specific detail on the data sources to be exploited and the methods to be employed, along with consideration of the selection criteria and trade-offs involved at each stage of the decision-making. It includes a discussion of pertinent ethical issues, and an assessment of both the limitations and the potential of the proposed design. Finally, since “every research tool or procedure is inextricably embedded in commitments to particular versions of the world” (Hughes 1990, p.11), reference to the Introduction is relevant at this point, so as to permit some transparency on the particular version of the world framing this research. “Qualitative research is a complex interaction between the researcher and the researched” (Williams and May 1996, p. 9), and the reader deserves as much information on the former as on the latter in order to make a reliable judgement on the quality of the research and the ultimate credibility of its findings.

Research Design

Grief is a time-consuming phenomenon, unfolding over years of an individual's lifetime and traversing generations in the case of collective groups. It seems fair to assume that at a national level, the grieving experience would occupy an indefinite period of time in a nation's history, constituting a sequence of events that begins with a significant national loss

and continues through the subsequent lived experience of at least two generations, the one directly affected by the loss and its immediate successor. For all practical purposes, this means a minimum of between thirty and sixty years, a period of time which can be “cased” (Bearman et al. 1999) with the loss at the beginning and, to ensure contemporary relevance, the present moment at the end, in order to give meaning to the sequence of events it contains.

Given the necessity of a longitudinal unit of analysis, the only appropriate and feasible research strategy would seem to be a case study, pattern-comparing the essential grief theory trajectory with the event sequences of the specific “cased” periods of national history. Yin (2009 p.18) makes a distinction between a case study as “an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context”, and a history as dealing with “the entangled situation between phenomenon and context”. He associates case studies with the present, thus amenable to direct research methods such as observation and interview; and histories with the past, and consequently reliant on secondary sources of data. This is a neat, but perhaps over-simplified, distinction, and one which goes against the theoretical framework of identity and memory outlined in previous chapters, where the diachronic relationship between past and present was shown to be as relevant to the research issues as any synchronic interconnection between phenomenon and context.

The case study approach allows for such levels of complexity. By catering for sequences of events through time as well as descriptions of current situations, it permits the retention of the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. In the same way as studying an individual biography does not bring with it the picture of an isolated individual, but rather an awareness of that individual in society (Plummer 1983), so the examination of a national history will involve an awareness of that nation in an international context. As Stake (2006, pp. ix-x) puts it, “Many phenomena take on different lives or forms depending on the particular hosts or local conditions....It is important to examine the common characteristics of these phenomena, but it is also important to examine situational uniqueness,

especially complexity and interaction with background conditions". An appreciation of this interaction, on both the synchronic and diachronic levels, is achievable with a case study approach, which can preserve the multiple realities at play in any situation, and allow for the many different and often contradictory perspectives on what is actually going on.

A major decision to be made in any case study is how many cases to cover. Silverman (2006) argues that in any qualitative research it is better to say a lot about a little rather than vice versa, and that depth is preferable to breadth. Yin (2009), however, reminds us that a single case study could turn out to be putting all the research eggs in one basket, and that a multiple case study is generally more robust. King et al. (1994, pp. 208-9) argue that "The more evidence we can find in varied contexts, the more powerful our explanation becomes, and the more confidence we and others should have in our conclusions". Stake (2006) focuses on the function of any case study analysis, seeing the multiple case study as primarily instrumental, aimed at a better understanding of the particular phenomenon in the research spotlight.

Since the primary aim of this particular piece of research is to establish the existence of the national grief phenomenon in the first place, with any gains in the understanding of it coming as secondary benefits or as means to the overall research end, the inclusion of multiple cases seems superfluous. Yet a single case study might pose too much of a risk: the case selected might not turn out to be anything like what it was anticipated as being at the outset; and, whether it provides positive evidence supporting the argument, or negative evidence refuting it, the findings could be all too easily dismissed as based on a one-off example. Two cases are clearly better, with the proviso borne in mind that a pairing should not lead to comparison where comparison is neither the purpose of the research, nor necessarily an appropriate means of arriving at answers to the research question. Klotz's (2008) category of "more than two, but not a lot" would seem ideal, but the ultimate decision on two or more than two, has to be tempered by considerations of time and resources, and can perhaps only be taken in the light of which particular cases are to be selected for study.

Case Selection

The process of case selection in a qualitative research design of this nature clearly has to be intentional rather than random, the intention being to assess the argument for national grief by studying nations which have endured significant loss and their subsequent reactions to that loss. Obviously, not every nation is a suitable candidate, but the identification of contenders which appear to fit the bill is not a difficult task. The world in the latter half of the twentieth century, to pin down the time scale for the required longitudinal unit of analysis, abounds with wars, genocides, partitions and occupations. The researcher into national grief would, unfortunately, appear to be spoilt for choice.

So, how to select from the plethora of possibilities? Two important criteria are foregrounded in the literature on case study research methods: variance and falsification. Causality needs variance, as Leuffen (2007) points out, and cases should be selected with a view towards guaranteeing sufficient variance in terms of the research question. This makes for better understanding of the phenomenon, and more powerful explanations (Stake 2006). The potential for falsification is also deemed desirable. Negative instances and deviant cases that might serve to falsify emerging causal propositions need to be sought out and examined, thus providing greater validity for the research (Seale 1999), which might otherwise be open to criticisms of selection bias.

How might these criteria apply to this particular researcher's personal selection bias towards the cases of Palestine and Israel, as explained in the Introduction? With regard to variance, despite their current geographical proximity, we are looking at two very different peoples undergoing two different kinds of loss. In the case of Palestine, an Arab people lost its lands to the creation of Israel in the nakba of 1948, and has endured enormous difficulties ever since, fragmented as a nation, its original loss largely unacknowledged by the west, its plight regularly exploited by its regional neighbours. With Israel, the focus is on the loss suffered by European Jewry

in the holocaust, and on the emergence of the state of Israel in the wake of that loss.

The principle of variance might indicate a need to move away from Europe and the Middle East and seek out cases of nations from a wholly different culture, with a completely different approach to loss and suffering. The Kingdom of Cambodia in the thirty year aftermath of its genocidal killing fields initially came across as a good candidate, as did Tibet following the Chinese invasion and occupation. These cases, both with a strong Buddhist background, could provide a good degree of variance from the already sufficiently different Israeli and Palestinian national post-loss trajectories. But a cursory appraisal of the volume and complexity of the data involved in even one of these four possible national case studies quickly put paid to the idea of the inclusion of the latter two. Only the degree of economy of effort afforded by the fact that the national histories of Palestine and Israel are so intertwined, if so different, led to the decision to retain both of them as case studies.

With regard to the principle of falsification, none of the four cases mentioned above gave the impression, on initial investigation, of being able to provide any negative instances. Where might be found a nation which had clearly undergone significant loss of the war, genocide, or occupation variety, and yet did not seem to display immediately visible traces of the collective reactions and behaviours which such loss typically appears to entail? Right next door to Israel and Palestine, a likely candidate presented itself in the shape of Lebanon, a nation which had experienced a complex, multi-faceted, fifteen year civil war between 1975 and 1990, but which seemed to collectively pick itself up and dust itself off after that war and get on with life. A great deal of individual grief, pain and suffering resulted from the Lebanese “events” of those years, but any collective picture is far less clear than it would appear to be in either Palestine or Israel. Moreover, the very ascription of a national collectivity to the Lebanese people, with their eighteen different official religious confessions and their numerous conflicting sectarian interests, might seem like a contradiction in terms.

However, despite Lebanon's inherent potential for the elusive falsifiability, and despite the economy of access and effort permitted by the geographical proximity of Israel and Palestine, along with the extensive interweaving of all three national histories throughout the period in focus, it has not been included as a study. Practical considerations surrounding the wealth and complexity of data available for thorough and in-depth exploration of each case, in relation to the limitations of time and words imposed by the dissertation format, ultimately ruled out its inclusion.

Finally settling, after due consideration, on the original two cases of Palestine and Israel, any remaining concern about selection bias on the basis of preconceived notions can perhaps best be allayed by taking into consideration Flyvbjerg's (2004 p.429) comments on case study research design in general, "The case study contains no greater bias towards verification of the researcher's preconceived notions than other methods of inquiry. On the contrary, experience indicates that the case study contains a greater bias toward falsification of preconceived notions than toward verification".

In addition, with regard to overall strategy, the aim is to view the selected cases from as many perspectives as possible. As Nagel (1986) points out, there is no view from nowhere, and, if this inquiry into national post-loss trajectories is to succeed in illustrating and illuminating the research issues, it must view them from a variety of angles. Accounting for the multiplicity and contestedness of the various discourses surrounding these cases over space and time may go some way towards offsetting the potential influence of any preconceptions. A central theme of the approach is the decentring of the studies, in the sense of de-emphasising the privileged centres of narrative and analysis which propagate the predominant western view (Gienow-Hecht 2007). History and identity are only encountered through representation, but an awareness of whose representation and for what purpose, on what authority and against what resistance (Dunn 2008), can be a helpful companion, guiding the researcher to inhabit the "lived border between reality and representation" (Gubrium and Holstein 1997, p.102), and, ultimately, to construct their own representation of the various representations examined.

History Data Sources

When dealing with periods of history, the use of secondary sources in the form of texts and documents is inevitable. They serve as substitutes for records of activity that the researcher is unable to observe directly (Stake 1995). Neumann (2008), in fact, sees little difference between documents and ethnography, inasmuch as we “read” societal processes as the functional equivalent of texts, utilising the same interpretive skills and employing the same levels of cultural competence. In addition, text-based sources provide the benefits of stability, in that they can be reviewed repeatedly; usually, of accuracy, in terms of names, dates and similar verifiable details; and of broad coverage with regard to time and place (Yin 2009). They are, for the most part, readily accessible, rich sources of data, demonstrating through their very existence the properties of relevance to and consequence in the world; and they present accounts of what people actually do, not just what they say they do (Silverman 2006).

However, the use of texts and documents has, as with any data source, its pitfalls and limitations. They cannot be scanned in terms of direct correspondence to reality, since there is a need for constant vigilance over the restrictions, constraints and fallibilities of data collected and presented at the hands of others (Lee 2000). What has to be consistently borne in mind is where the author or compiler is speaking from, as regards his social, political, historical and cultural position; to whom the document is addressed; and for whom and for what purpose it has been written (Leander 2008; May 2001). Such inherent bias will be reflected as much by what is not included as by what is actually presented. And the problem of bias is compounded by the problem of reliability with regard to comprehensiveness, in that a text may present a fragmented or incomplete picture either as a result of deliberate authorial choice or simply through limited availability or accessibility of data or information (Tafoya 1984).

For each of the case study nations, a collection has been assembled of some twenty odd reputable, authoritative narrative histories covering, either wholly or partially, the period in question. These sources were identified through

exhaustive internet searches of reading lists from universities with strong political history or Middle East studies departments in the United Kingdom, the United States, other Anglophone countries like Australia and Canada, and the region in study focus itself. In addition, the websites of organisations with a long-standing and widely recognised interest in and agenda for the case study nations, such as the Institute for Palestine Studies, the Institute for Global Jewish Affairs, Jews for Justice, the many centres and associations for Israel and Jewish studies and for Middle Eastern studies in general, provide lists of relevant books and publications which served to complement the more academic recommendations. The aim was to build up a concise but authoritative data source representing as many different perspectives in cultural and political terms on each of the case studies as possible, limited only by language, time and availability. In addition, the effort was made to achieve a degree of diachronic spread, so as to give some variation of viewpoint in terms of historical point of time.

With these data sources in place, they can be scanned in a process-tracing (George and Bennett 2004) exercise for any definable and commonly recounted patterns in the big-picture chain of events and occurrences following the loss. As Stake (1995) observes, all research is a search for patterns and consistencies, and whatever patterns are found in the histories of the case study nations can then be compared to the typical pattern of the grief trajectory. This comparison is effected by examining the national histories through the lens of grief theory, within a framework of the fundamentals of the grief experience, namely: the initial, identity-damaging, grief-triggering loss; any discernible emotional response; the attempt to make some sense of the post-loss situation involving memory in this meaning-making activity; and all this woven into and influenced by the concurrent and ongoing interactions between the loss-sufferers and the specific contexts in which they find themselves. The greater correspondence in these terms between the patterns of the post-loss national history and of the grief trajectory, the stronger the argument for national grief becomes.

There is general agreement in the methods literature, however, that the credibility of any research exercise can be enhanced by the provision of

additional ways of generating evidence. The employment of multiple sources of data can lead to a convergence of corroborating lines of inquiry, thus rendering the study more robust, especially if these additional methods are approached with a readiness to revise any tentative claims in the light of what they reveal (Seale 1999; Yin 2009). Methodological triangulation, in getting a bearing on the research question from two distinct points, can serve to increase confidence in the interpretations and overall conclusions of the research: it can help to “minimise misperception and the invalidity of our conclusions” (Stake 1995, p.134).

Current Identity Data Sources

Focus Groups

If current identity depends on the presence of a coherent narrative of the past, if history is the “proof and record” (Young 1995, p. 221) of present existence, then traces of this history should be discernible in current identity. Bringing them to light is the research problem. Participant observation in the case study societies might be considered one method of acquiring the relevant data, but this would demand impractically long periods of time and the surmounting of formidable linguistic barriers. Moreover, personal experience of living and working in foreign countries for periods of up to six years at a time has proved to this particular researcher that, even with a good command of the language and general immersion in the culture, the ability to see things from the host nation perspective can remain a challenge.

Interrogation is the generally accepted alternative to observation. As Kellehear (1993, p.1) notes “There is today in social science circles a simple and persistent belief that knowledge about people is available simply by asking”. However, since national identity tends to be such an unquestioned, almost unconscious, background strand amongst the multiple personal identities any individual holds and displays, its features could prove difficult to elicit from people who may be generally unaware of their national identity characteristics at a conscious level. Moreover, the whole notion of national

grief is not one that is easily accessible without a certain amount of explanation and illustration. Any attempts to capture data in these areas by means of questionnaires or interviews would therefore require a degree of directive focus and structure that could prove counter-productive to the research aims, firstly, by linguistically setting in stone concepts that need to remain relatively fluid in order to be meaningful in the different national contexts; and secondly, by pre-setting the agenda for and the terms of any potentially enlightening unstructured conversation that might arise from them. In addition, these techniques privilege the individual perspective when the focus of study is a collective phenomenon.

Initially, it seemed as if the focus group, “a group of individuals selected and assembled by researchers to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of the research” (Powell et al. 1996, p.499), might fit the bill. As an organised discussion or group interview, it is a way of gaining a variety of views and experiences on a research topic from several perspectives at once, and is recognised as particularly useful for triangulation and validity checking (Morgan 1988). In particular, given the collective nature of the phenomenon being examined here, the focus group, by crucially relying on interaction to produce insights and data (Kitzinger 1994, 1995; Morgan, 1997), can get at shared understandings and reveal collective values and beliefs, as well as some of the contestations surrounding them.

On the negative side, focus groups are time-consuming to organise, and the outcome particularly unpredictable when organised from a distance. They are difficult to control, since the participants can easily take the lead, although this feature can be seen as a positive methodological advantage if that lead happens to produce worthwhile, authentic, independent data. And crucially, due to the small numbers and inherent lack of representativeness, focus group findings are not generalisable, since the group views cannot be attributed to a whole population. Despite these drawbacks, the focus group technique seemed to present the only real possibility for a direct encounter with current national identity and a reality check on the findings from the secondary sources historical data.

Plans were drawn up, contacts made, and arrangements set in train for conducting two sessions, one in Tel Aviv, one in the West Bank, each with a group of ten to twelve English-speaking university students. These sessions would comprise a brief initial presentation of the general concept of national grief, followed by a group discussion on how the phenomenon might refer, if at all, to the groups' own respective situations. But the more advanced the preparations became, the more uneasy I felt about the whole project.

The lack of representativeness was a real issue. Given the fragmented nature of Palestinian society, in the West Bank, Gaza, the refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan, not to mention the huge diaspora in the USA, Europe, and other Arab countries, most of whom still regard themselves as essentially Palestinian, how could any meaningful conclusions be arrived at from a discussion amongst some young, middle-class West bankers? Equally, given the enormous ethnic range within Israel, from European Ashkenazi Jews, through oriental Jews and Ethiopian Falasha to recent Russian immigrants, along with the increasingly widening social class distinctions there, how could any of this national complexity possibly be reflected in a one-hour discussion with a small group of, again, largely middle-class well-educated university students? Of course, more focus groups could have been arranged in order to achieve a greater level of representativeness, but the planning and long-distance logistics involved in just these two suggested that expansion of the focus group approach might well entail an investment in terms of time and effort out of all proportion to any conceivable results.

In any case, I had other concerns. Language was a major one. Obviously, a good command of English was a necessary criterion for selection to the focus groups. I have some Arabic, but no Hebrew, and, in any case, capture of the original data in English meant less effort put into translation and less room for doubt, when it came to the findings, as regards the quality and reliability of that translation. But national identity, as already discussed in previous chapters, can be a highly emotive issue, and even more so in contexts like the Middle East where people have been put on the defensive about that very aspect of their identities. Could I really expect such emotive matters to be discussed in a second language, a language that even where mastered

would normally be used for the formalities of business or study rather than as a medium for expressing the passions of personal or emotional life?

Finally, and most importantly, I was beginning to feel a great sense of discomfort about the actual handling of these focus group sessions, and how the dynamics of the interaction between researched and researcher might be affected by the way in which my role, whether as moderator or as observer, could be perceived by the focus group participants. Firstly, I thought the set-up could be seen as exuding more than a whiff of colonialism, particularly given my nationality and the part played by the English-speaking western world in general in historic developments in the region. Secondly, given the focus on loss, grief and suffering, and the sensitivities involved in discussing identities to which these might be central, it struck me that any probing might conceivably be viewed as smacking of amateur psychiatry. However sensitively, diplomatically, or obliquely I planned to approach these sessions, however well prepared and presented they might be, there seemed to be an enormous risk of coming over as a self-appointed fixer to focus group participants, who would thus perceive themselves as cast in the role of the needing to be fixed. Perhaps something less obtrusive (Kellehear 1993; Webb et al. 1966) was needed.

Visual Arts

The arts in general have not played a mainstream role in social science research, which is surprising given their prevalence in the social enterprise of making sense of the human condition and the surrounding world. The virtual absence of the arts from the research scene can probably be put down to the fact that they have not been considered as a form of knowledge by a positivist tradition which views them as primarily emotive rather than informative (Eisner 2008). This same tradition sees art as a form of individual expression, quintessentially subjective and privileging imagination over fact: "Art is me, science is us" (Daston 1999). But increasing appreciation of the need for a more richly textured way of understanding ourselves and our societies, one which embraces feelings as much as facts, appears to be

creating the beginnings of a paradigm shift. Social science research involving the arts is an emerging and expanding genre, extending well beyond the approach of using artistic works as data which I am proposing here, to the use of arts-based methods in eliciting information from individual interviewees (Bagnoli 2009; Knowles and Cole 2008).

Concepts of art and the artist vary according to the specific time period and society in question, and different cultures will hold different views on what art is and what the role of the artist entails. But in any society, the artist functions essentially as a form-giver to the most pervasive ideas of his time. As Pollock observes, "Art is both a mode of thought and a searching for a form for the as-yet-unthought", suggesting that a study of art history "articulates through formal and signifying processes a means of our understanding a singular, situated yet social relation to (the) changing texture of collective life" (2007, p.171). This social nature of artistic production is highlighted by many writers. Bourdieu (1991, 1993) sees artists as forming part of an elaborate social web that directly shapes their work. Becker (1982) argues that every instance of artistic production is the result of an inherently collective effort. Wolff (1993) regards the artist as a locus for the mediation of different aesthetic codes and societal processes, his work an expression of that mediation and a site where values can be negotiated and critical consciousness developed.

The artist can thus be viewed as a powerful cultural agent, a myth-maker who participates in the social construction of reality by playing an active role in society. Gaztambide-Fernandez (2008) defines the range of roles available to the artist in contemporary western or western-influenced society as the cultural civiliser, the border-crosser or the representator. The first, born of enlightenment values and liberal humanism, involves producing works of beauty that will continue the civilising tradition of modernity. This approach of art for art's sake firmly positions the artist as a promoter of the traditional values of his culture. The border-crosser, more a case of art for politics' sake, seeks to challenge boundaries and expectations, disturbing the established order so as to stimulate and encourage social transformation. The representator, reflecting the intrusion of the marketplace into art, produces artistic works as part of a discourse of cultural populism, these works serving

as representations of larger struggles over meaning and identification. This type of art is only important in terms of the audience response and reaction, not by virtue of any inherent qualities of its own. Groys (2008), who views art works essentially as thought-provoking props for popular imagination, would seem to argue that only the latter two roles, border-crosser and representator, are valid for the artist of today when he writes that “Under the conditions of modernity an artwork can be produced and brought to the public in two ways: as a commodity, or as a tool of political propaganda” (pp.6-7).

While all of the above points regarding the social relevance of art and the nature of the art work as a complex venue for the process of collective self-definition are applicable in varying degrees to the arts in general, the particular art form selected for research purposes here is that of the visual arts. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, the visual medium obviates the need for concern about language issues, as already referred to above. Secondly, initial investigations suggested a level playing field in that both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples can boast a strong, vibrant, internationally acclaimed, visual arts scene, operating through similar media. This would not be the case with literary or dramatic art forms, where the research approach might be impeded by the fact that Israel presents a more western tradition and Palestine a more oriental one, in addition to the inbuilt language problems these art forms present. And in the case of films, a potentially rich vein of data and professionally enough subtitled in English to accommodate linguistic concerns, although the underlying difference in tradition would generally prove no obstacle to appreciation or understanding, the Israeli canon of production is significantly larger and more varied, for obvious reasons, than the Palestinian one.

Thirdly, the artists of both societies, by dint of living in situations where politics is an inescapable feature of everyday existence, tend to be border-crossers, challenging the status quo by raising controversial issues. This means that although the views they present may not always accord with the dominant or mainstream ones held by their society, their work, in focussing on points of contention and areas of negotiation within that society, should

provide some indications of both the dominant and contending viewpoints in current interplay over the issues in question.

And finally, in the spirit of Albers' ethics of perception, looking at art can provide an opportunity for "direct seeing", whereby the experience of the attention being drawn to perceptual habits allows for the recognition of routine cognitive associations as social constructions and permits these associations to be influenced, challenged and possibly transformed (Diaz, 2008). Sourcing data from works of visual art might thus serve to challenge any stagnant perceptual habits that this particular researcher, or my readers, might have with regard to the research topic in focus.

A handful of studies have successfully employed the visual arts as a source of data for historical and cultural analysis by using them to shed light on a people and what makes them tick at any particular point in time. Some focus on the ways in which visual art interacts with and informs social processes, for example: Leoussi's (2004) coverage of the rise of national art between the late eighteenth and twentieth century in Europe, illustrating how artists participated in "the formulation, crystallisation and celebration of the ethno-cultural roots and identities of modern societies" (p. 156), thus aiding the transformation from ethnicity to nationality that was a social feature of the times; or Connor and Rhode's demonstration (2003) of how photographs and paintings of amputees, wounded soldiers and victims of disease from the American Civil War, served to construct contemporary ideas of war and ultimately functioned as sites for the interpretation and negotiation of American self-identity. Others use visual art primarily as a means of understanding social processes, for example: Kivelson and Neuberger's (2008) "Picturing Russia", which uses visual culture, including the visual arts, to explore aspects of Russian society over the entire span of Russian history, adding a new dimension by putting visuality at the core of the approach; Aries' (1985) tracing of changing social attitudes to death over two thousand years of western Christianity as reflected in over four hundred visual representations, including paintings, woodcuts, lithographs, tombstones and funerary medallions; or McGregor's (2003) thesis of a Canadian "garrison mentality", supported by reference to the constant reproduction of boundaries

in painting, television and film, this imposition of limits in art echoing the way in which Canadians go about constructing their space in life. This particular piece of research belongs in the latter category, trying to gain from visual art works some appreciation of what is going on in the respective case study societies, some indication of what particular issues of national identity might be up for negotiation in such sites as artists provide.

Palestinian and Israeli Contemporary Visual Arts

Visual art works produced by contemporary Palestinian and Israeli artists are employed as data sources to triangulate the findings from the textual sources which provide the data on the respective histories of the two nations. These works are scanned for evidence of the grief trajectory in much the same way as the history texts, “read” for traces of collective loss, emotional reaction, and attempts to make sense of the post-loss world, which might relate to or be explained by what is found in the texts. Since the emphasis in this part of the research is on current identity, contemporariness is a key selection criterion: the art works under consideration belong largely to the past decade, the first ten years of the twenty-first century, with the occasional exception made for a particularly seminal or iconic work belonging properly to the mid or late nineties.

The artists in focus are those whose work is routinely featured in the collections of their own national museums and major art galleries (obviously more relevant in the Israeli than the Palestinian case) and is regularly selected to represent their nations in prestigious overseas exhibitions, in the likes of London, Paris, and New York, or at the Venice Biennale. In both the national and international spheres, their names are known and their art is acknowledged by the professional art world as embodying the highest levels of current artistic practice. The fact that the international art world, traditionally based on the ownership of works by a few wealthy individuals and institutions, is widely perceived as commercial and elitist in nature, might seem to cast doubt on the use of those art works which it endorses as sources of authentic data for understanding social processes. Certainly, in an

increasingly globalised art market, major international art festivals and institutions wield enormous power and influence with regard to both the positioning and pricing of art works. But the art world is equally subject to the forces of globalisation and consumerism as any other domain, and these forces can be viewed as beneficially having contributed a hybrid vigour to artistic practice through enabling the fluid and anarchic mixing of media, techniques and ideas, and having encouraged an anti-elitist blurring of the boundaries between “high art” and popular culture. Moreover, art is generally expensive to produce, to transport and to display, so the money generated by the art world is necessary to underwrite the activities of both artists and exhibitors.

In the final analysis, however, the art has to be valued on its own terms, regardless of the art world which supports and endorses it. This world may privilege artists in its own image, with an educated background and liberal democratic leanings; it may favour art-that-makes-you-think over other types of art. But the essential authenticity of the works of internationally recognised artists is not affected by any perceived inauthenticity or partiality of the world which rates, markets and nurtures them. “Artists are part of a sort of community of inquiry” (Wright 2004, p.535): they have something to say. Galleries and festivals get audiences, largely middle-class and educated with critical faculties and views of their own. The basic imaginative interaction between artist and viewer that is at the core of every effective artistically creative work may be mediated, exploited and manipulated by the art world, but it cannot be fabricated or counterfeited.

By the very nature of the history of the two peoples under the spotlight, several of the artists in the above category belong to their national diasporas, or at least are not living full-time in their countries, with the result that some of their art may be focussed on the country that is their chosen home or their enforced place of exile, and not on Israel or Palestine itself. Artists who have living arrangements of this sort, such as Israelis now based in America, or Palestinians from the Gaza Strip living in Paris, are included in the selection if a substantial amount of their work deals with their Israeli or Palestinian identity and is regularly exhibited under that heading. In one or two cases,

specifically of Arab Israelis or Israeli Palestinians, whichever term is preferred usage, the situation is even more complex: their work may be exhibited overseas in exhibitions of Palestinian art, while being simultaneously shown in the gallery for contemporary Israeli art at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

The main art forms included are video, photography, and various types of visual art installation. Painting is not excluded, but seems to be less central to the current visual arts scenes in both countries, for reasons which will be gone into in chapter six, which deals in detail with the art work. Use of the same media which characterise major art works at the western epicentre of the global art market, could be interpreted as indicating a slavish following of international trends when employed by artists working at what might be perceived as the edges of that market. But it comes across clearly in any viewing of Israeli or Palestinian contemporary visual art that though the media used may conform to the dominant trends of the international art world, the messages conveyed through them are distinctly local, and serve to render the artistic product all the more vibrant for that fact.

Locating and identifying the relevant art work involved a certain amount of travel. Given the fragmented nature of the Palestinian community throughout the Middle East region, Europe and the United States, the Palestinian art was the more difficult to access. France, however, has always made much of Arab culture, particularly through the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, so attendance at a couple of large exhibitions there, as well as at the city-wide Paris Photo exhibition which had an Arab theme in 2009, provided enough leads to follow up at smaller galleries in both Paris and London, and on the internet. Israel's main exhibitions and most prominent artists tend to favour American audiences over European ones, so a trip to Israel to take in the major galleries and museums in both Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, along with relevant smaller, private galleries, facilitated the necessary viewings and information-gathering for the Israeli art work.

In addition to seeing a lot of visual art firsthand, and following some up on the internet, it was also necessary to collect a fair amount of catalogues and critical material about the work viewed. For in sourcing data from the visual

art works selected, account needs to be taken of informed interpretations as to what these works actually mean, what the artists are saying. In some cases, the message may seem startlingly obvious, but there are always nuances and alternative readings which can only be perceived by those au fait with the visual art world in general and with the relevant national art history in particular. This particular researcher's reading of the various art works under consideration will not necessarily be withheld, but will always be preceded and informed by professional comment from within the visual arts world so as to guarantee some degree of reliability as regards interpretation.

Ethical Issues

"Researchers have ethical responsibilities to anticipate the impact of the study on those studied, and to ensure that, at very least, the benefits of investigations outweigh any possible negative effects that they might have." (Smyth and Robinson 2001, p. 208) On the face of it, this statement, typical of the many cautions against doing harm found in the research methods literature, can be seen, in philosophical terms, as perhaps raising more questions than it answers. Who is to judge whether effects are beneficial or harmful? On what basis is such judgement to be made? And what about the risk factor involved in the occurrence of unintended consequences?

As with any undertaking which involves interaction with other people, engagement in research implies inherent consequences for both the researched and the researcher. While this is not the place for a philosophical inquiry on the nature of ethics or a debate about the absolutism or relativism of moral truth, it is clear that the researcher needs to adopt a responsible approach by giving serious and informed forethought to what he perceives as the likelihood of any adverse effects arising from these consequences. And due consideration of the potential ethical issues involved in the overall research design and process, to the extent that the researcher's own perception, knowledge and experience permit, can go some way towards forestalling any such adverse effects.

Denscombe (2002) suggests that the ethical principle of doing no harm, or at least minimising potential harm, in the course of the research process, can be maintained by continually keeping in focus the rights and interests of those affected by the research in terms of impact, intrusion and confidentiality. With regard to this particular piece of research, the fact that the idea of using focus groups has been discarded in favour of reliance solely on secondary sources in the form of texts and visual arts works, might suggest that these considerations are redundant since no-one is being directly questioned or interviewed for any part of the data-gathering. But although confidentiality becomes less relevant in a research design which employs published texts and publicly exhibited art works as data sources, impact and intrusion can still be regarded as legitimate issues for examination. The research findings and the way in which they are written up will presumably have an impact on whoever reads them, and if any of these readers profess to Palestinian or Israeli identity, or have, for whatever reason, strong views about the history, the treatment or the behaviour of either people, then that impact is likely to be even more forceful. In addition, a piece of research on one of the most complex situations in geopolitics might well be perceived as intrusive by those who live it on a daily basis, by those who have given years of their lives to attempting to find a solution to it, or by those who have built up an acknowledged expertise on the region, its history and its peoples.

For these reasons, although the research design does not cater for any direct human interaction as a data-capturing technique, the study still has to be considered as belonging in the category of sensitive research. Lee (1993, p. 4) defines sensitive research as “research which potentially poses a substantial threat to those who are or have been involved with it”. By straying into areas considered private or controversial, such research involves potential costs to the researched, and, on occasion, to the researcher. And the central topic of this particular piece of research, the grief of nations, contains, in those four small words, two conceivable areas of sensitivity.

The nation, as defined in the previous chapter, can be viewed as a strand of identity, and dealing with identity is always tricky, even more so in a region

bristling with sensitivities as a result of how people there feel they have been regarded and treated by the rest of the world. Offering comment on any aspect of identity can be perceived as threatening loss of face, and, although national self-criticism, and even self-ridicule, is a recognised British trait, this relaxed approach is not universal, nor even wide-spread. Other people's national identities usually have to be approached along a path of eggshells. In the cases of Israel and Palestine, this rings particularly true, since their respective national identities appear to be adhered to with a particular tenacity. Those caught up in conflict situations, as Armakolas (2001) observes, often have a very stable and fixed conception of their identities.

Moreover, the notion of grief, as noted in the previous chapters, can carry connotations of weakness. Admitting to grief, to being completely bowled over by loss, may be acceptable in some western societies where there are traditions of psychiatric counselling and where the open expression of emotion is viewed as good and healthy. But this is not universally the case, and there are societies where the need for counselling services or any form of similar social support would be regarded as a sign of weakness and source of shame (Hammoud et al. 2005). The very suggestion of national grief in such a context could easily be interpreted as a slur on national pride. The experience of loss may be ubiquitous to the extent that, as Buddhists believe, it serves to define the human condition given the essential transience and temporariness of our physical environment. But popular understanding of the grief which accompanies the experience has developed, as noted in the first chapter, from earlier psychologically-based theoretical models and is, by definition, a fundamentally western construction. In non-western settings, therefore, the term is open to being construed negatively, unless the way in which the idea of grief is conceived of and employed in this particular dissertation is fully apprehended.

The research topic thus presents a veritable minefield in terms of sensitivities, since sensitivity is culturally determined. What a westerner might view as intrusion, for example, is not intrusion for an Arab. Hall (1966, p.15) points out the essential differences in terms of physical space, with the Arab experiencing no discomfort in terms of close proximity and actual physical

contact with strangers, while the westerner needs to preserve a private bubble around himself in public. This difference appears to apply equally at a mental level: subjects like politics and religion might be regarded as sensitive, but are freely and frequently discussed, as long as the discussion does not include frank disagreement with or directly negative comment on the opinions proffered (Nydell 2006, ps. 34-50). The unwritten rule of interaction is not to cause anyone to lose face (Patai 1976, ps. 108-113) by blatantly disputing or attempting to disprove their position.

It is difficult to generalise about a society as multicultural and pluralist as Israel has become, but it is quite definitely also a “contact culture”, with less regard for the maintenance of personal space than most westerners can easily accommodate. The difference here is that there is something of a “me-first” approach to the proxemics (Brill 2010). Again, this quality would seem to extend to the non-physical sphere, where what is often perceived by other cultures as abrasiveness, arrogance and bad manners in everyday interaction and discussion, is regarded by Israelis themselves as admirable directness and honesty, indicative of their no-nonsense manner in getting down to the business in hand. In fact, the list of characteristics attributed to the archetypal “sabra” (a term denoting a local cactus plant - tough and prickly on the outside, but with a soft heart – and used to describe the native-born of the originally more homogeneous Israel) includes “a rough and direct way of expressing themselves” and “a native sense of supremacy” (Almog 2000, p.7).

Collectively, however, Israel can display enormous sensitivity. Loss of aggregate face would appear to be threatened by any external criticism that might be interpreted as betraying an anti-Israeli stance, as with their repudiation of the international condemnation of their treatment of the inhabitants of Gaza; or with their vociferous complaints about work like that of the Spanish artist, Eugenio Merino, who featured in one sculpture a menorah emerging from the barrel of a machine-gun (*Haaretz* 18 February, 2010). And collective sensitivities are equally offended by any reminders of an era when Jews were regarded as weak and victimised underdogs, as with the controversies that surround Israeli involvement in or association with the

performance of Wagner's music (Sheffi 2002); or with the inevitable official complaints over any incident, anywhere in the world, that might be perceived as trivialising or normalising the Nazi regime.

All these sensitivities have to be catered for in the research process as far as possible, so as not to unduly cause offence or create misunderstanding. Intrusion does not appear to be a major problem with either culture, as long as the approach is honest and respectful. There have certainly been enough comments on, books about, inquiries into and research concerning the region, to lead to the conclusion that probably both Israelis and Palestinians must be somewhat immune to intrusion by now. If not actively welcoming it, they most likely have learned to disregard it. But impact remains an issue: how to walk a tightrope between coming across as anodyne for fear of giving offence, and presenting ideas with such a lack of delicacy as to impede any appreciation of their substance.

Given the region of the world and the peoples in focus, it would be unrealistic to aspire to a goal of universal approval. But the risk of causing affront and indignation can perhaps be minimised by a sustained conscious effort to practise tact and discretion at every stage of the research process. This implies a high level of vigilance in the approach to the data sources, both as regards the ethical implications of the hierarchies of knowledge these texts and visuals represent, with their intrinsic patterns of power and exclusion (Ackerly 2008); and as regards the ethical implications of the researcher's own inbuilt biases and predispositions. The best a researcher can probably do with regard to the latter is identify his own particular affiliations and commitments (Stake 2006), while recognising that sides are taken simply by virtue of being a member of society (Hammersley 2000), and to approach the whole research exercise in as much of a spirit of reflexivity as possible. This calls for a heightened awareness of self, and a continual questioning of why we notice what we notice, and why we interpret as we interpret (Elliott 2005).

Sensitivity, humility and self-reflection need to be constant companions during the reading, the viewing, the analysis, and the writing up, all equally engaged with the researcher in a relentless scanning for and continual

alertness to any unquestioned assumptions, alternative interpretations, optional perceptions, or potential susceptibilities to charges of disrespect or disregard in either substance or style. It is to be hoped that through the employment of such measures an overall ethic of caution can inform both the approach to and the conclusions of the research; and an ethic of consideration can enable the researcher “to sustain a deep respect and concern for all overriding any dictates of research procedure” (Bell 2001, p. 190) and, indeed, any tendencies to personal prejudice or partiality.

Limitations and Potential

The proposed research design has obvious limitations. The argument for national grief centres on a big-picture concept, occurring over generational stretches of time, at a macro-level of the nation within a global context. Yet only two cases, of relatively small and neither especially typical nor traditional nations, are being examined. In addition, for the sake of reduction of complexity and economy of effort, on behalf of both the reader and the researcher, these cases are selected from within such tight regional parameters that there is no case independence: to a great extent, they interrelate. However, to echo Smith (2005, p.212) in the context of his own case studies on the causes of wars, “These problems are neither greater nor lesser in magnitude here than in other studies that have attempted to derive generalisable results from the messy stuff of history: to identify cases that conform to the requirement for deep analogy from a mire of unique, unfolding, but also interconnected events”.

Similarly, with regard to the data, and the small sample, relative to the large phenomenon in study focus, of data sources proposed along with the attendant issues of representativeness, there is an inherent risk of sample bias. But again, given the necessary restrictions imposed by the doctoral dissertation format on both time and material resources, this risk is perhaps no greater than in any similar study, and can to a certain degree be countered by the purposeful attempt to utilise sources which offer as many different perspectives on the subject of study under scrutiny as possible.

This same deliberate search for and awareness of alternative viewpoints can also go some way towards offsetting the obvious limitation of one pair of researcher eyes, viewing the evidence from one personal angle. This inevitable disposition, however, is somewhat mitigated by the fact that this particular researcher, as explained in the Introduction, enters the research field after a thirty five year career in cultural relations overseas, working and living for most of that time in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, with only seven years spent in Europe (London and Paris). The net result is a perspective on the world which is not always, indeed, not often, in tune with the predominant western one.

Finally, the general academic research tradition aims at reliability and validity through adherence to the principles of scientific method, and this particular study attempts to conform to that tradition as much as possible. Thus, variance is catered for in the particular case selection, given the very different circumstances of loss and response to loss presented by the two situations; and in the different perspectives on these situations presented by the data sources. In addition, the triangulation of the evidence on history supplied by textual sources with that on current identity provided from visual arts sources, aims to get at national response to loss as lived and felt experience as well as historical narrative.

But scientific method in itself can be regarded as a limitation. The importance of inspiration, chance, accident and sheer curiosity in the history of science, is underlined by Feyerabend (1975) in his anarchistic theory of epistemology. Gould (1981) observes that science can be seen as a socially embedded activity, influenced by changing cultural contexts, which “progresses by hunch, vision and intuition” (pp.21- 22). Bearing this in mind, the design for this particular piece of research, while aiming to comply with scientific principles, is not intended as a straitjacket which prevents a spontaneous reaching out to the unavoidable and unpredictable opportunities and intuitions which the research process may present. In fact, the decision to discard the idea of focus groups and use the visual arts as data sources instead, stemmed from one such accidental opportunity. Walking into an exhibition of Palestinian art at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, more by

chance than purpose, and with the general aim of seeing if it could provide useful background on Palestinian history, I was struck halfway through my viewing by the realisation that here was an ideal focus group of sorts. The collection of art works expressed views that were more articulate, more openly emotional, more nuanced, and far more wide-ranging in terms of where the various respective Palestinian artists came from, than any real-life, real-time conventional focus group that I managed to assemble would be likely to come up with.

In conclusion, this study, given both its limitations and the measures employed to counteract them, can be seen as offering potential benefits in a number of areas. Firstly, it might serve to open up a new direction for grief research, engaging with large-scale national collectives rather than remaining restricted largely to the domain of the individual with the occasional application to smaller groups like the family. Grief theory itself could achieve a more powerful status when applied on the wider scale and with the broader range of relevance afforded by taking on this whole new area of research. Secondly, there could be spin-offs for the field of international relations. The grief theory perspective might provide fresh insights on aspects of national identity, national behaviour, and, by association, international relations. In particular, given the strongly affective nature of the grief experience, this perspective should be able to shed more light on the somewhat neglected area of the role of emotions in national interactions within a global context. And thirdly, by exploiting contemporary visual arts forms as data sources, this research adds substantially to the very small body of work which has used visual art as a way of accessing social meanings. If successfully employed, this approach could become more accepted as a valid means of understanding social concerns and attitudes, giving visual art a potentially more substantive role in the social sciences and helping to strengthen functional interdisciplinary links between the latter and the humanities.

4. PALESTINE: A CASE OF DISENFRANCHISED GRIEF?

"We have triumphed over the plan to expel us from history."

(Mahmoud Darwish, New York Times, 15 May, 1998)

This chapter uses the lens of grief theory to explore the history of the Palestinian people, from the loss of their lands as a result of the creation of Israel in 1948 up to the present day. As a prerequisite for this exploration, the status of the pre-1948 Palestinians as a people, a group with a collective consciousness, has to be established. For the very notion of a Palestinian nation or quasi-national community prior to the existence of Israel has been a highly contentious issue over the years, and one which is central to the disagreements and negotiations over territorial rights and compromises in the region. Certainly, if any case is to be made for discerning a pattern of collective loss and subsequent shared grief trajectory in the history of the Palestinians from 1948 on, there has to be some evidence of collectivity prior to those events.

Given, subsequent to this initial discussion of status, that the Palestinian people can be deemed to have possessed sufficient unity and collective identity to have suffered a shared loss in 1948, their ensuing history is examined with a view to how any discernible patterns of collective behaviour might fit with the pattern of the grieving experience as outlined in grief theory, particularly in terms of the fundamental elements of the grief trajectory laid out in the first two chapters, namely: the identity-damaging, grief-triggering loss; the subsequent emotional reaction; making sense of the post-loss world; and the ongoing interactions of the wider context surrounding the loss and its aftermath. The ways in which the events of the nakba (disaster) of 1948 damaged collective Palestinian identity, through the interrelated losses of land, of the social fabric of everyday life, and of aspirations to nationhood, are dealt with in some detail. Historical evidence for what might be construed, at a collective and an intergenerational level, as emotional reaction to these losses, and as attempts to attribute some meaning to the post-loss world, is

explored. And the influence of the specific international and historical context on the manner in which the Palestinian post-loss trajectory has played out and on its ultimate consequences is analysed. The most prominent feature of this context, and one which reverberates throughout the study, is the way in which the Palestinian perspective has been so consistently ignored and downplayed.

The historical data used in this attempt to build a meaningful conversation between grief theory and national history, is taken from a variety of sources: books and articles written by Palestinians themselves, by Israelis, by Americans and Europeans, both Jewish and non-Jewish. In addition, these were written at different points in time during the historical period under examination. For in a field where every “fact” is open to contentious argument, it seems important to make an effort to see the picture from as many different perspectives, along the axes of both space and time, as possible.

The Nation

The History of Palestine

In the seventh century, Jerusalem was captured from the Byzantines by Arab tribes, and the Byzantine province of Palaestina Prima became the military district of Filastin, the first area to be conquered by the Arab Muslims following the emergence of Islam. The Arab empire, stretching from Spain through North Africa and the Middle East to the borders of China in its heyday, retained its power for over six centuries of caliphate rule, although it was riven by revolts and dissension throughout that period, becoming increasingly internally fractured. In addition, from the eleventh century on, it suffered major external attack from the Seljuk Turks, the Mongols, and Christian crusaders. Jerusalem, given its significance for all the Abrahamic religions, was a prime focus for all these invading groups, and the crusaders established a Christian kingdom of Jerusalem in the Levant from the end of

the eleventh until the end of the thirteenth centuries, the city of Jerusalem itself being retaken for the Arabs by Saladin in 1187.

After the defeat of the Mongols and overthrow of the last remaining crusader castles, power gravitated to the Egypt-based Mamluks, Turkish sultans who ruled the region for the next two and a half centuries. From the sixteenth century, during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent, the region was incorporated into Turkish Ottoman rule, where it remained, bar a few minor interruptions such as Egyptian conquest and rule from 1831 to 1840, for the better part of the next four hundred years. In the overhaul of Ottoman administration, the tanzimat, which took place in 1873, the region of Palestine was split into three separate administrative units: the northern part was assigned to the vilayet of Beirut; the central and southern Negev to the vilayet of Hijaz; and the rest formed the independent sanjak of Jerusalem, reporting directly to the Sublime Porte in Istanbul.

During all this time, throughout the pre-nationalistic era of empires, Palestine was by turns a region, a province, a district or series of sub-districts, for administrative, taxation and military purposes, incorporated for the most part in a greater Syria, along with the areas now known as Lebanon and Jordan. With the fall of the Ottoman Empire as a result of the first world war, the western European great powers, Britain and France, took control of the whole region, dividing up the spoils of war between them. They drew frontiers around new states, which they held and administered under mandate from the League of Nations with a view to preparing them for eventual independence. Greater Syria was thus fragmented by an Anglo-French split: Syria and Lebanon in the north came under French mandate, Palestine and Transjordan in the south under British.

This is a quick run-through of what historical evidence (Gelvin 2005; Harms and Ferry 2005; Kimmerling and Migdal 2003; Lewis 1995; Smith 2007) tells us about Palestine and the people who lived there prior to the early twentieth century. Though its borders may have been vague and fluid over the centuries preceding the mandate period, the continuity, in terms of a recognised territorial integrity, of this particular region of the middle east

centred on the city of Jerusalem, is not in doubt. It might be presumed that continuity in terms of a cohesive population, essentially Arab, living their lives in Jerusalem, in the nearby coastal towns and cities, in the villages and farms of the surrounding countryside, generation after generation, through all the tumultuous changes outlined above, would be equally undeniable.

The Disappearing of the Palestinians

However, the early Zionist slogan “a land without a people for a people without a land”, formulated by Israel Zangwill at the end of the nineteenth century, and widely used thereafter to encourage the immigration of European Jews to Palestine, painted the latter as an empty land crying out for cultivation and development (Khalidi 1997, p.101; Said 1979, p.9). This “disappearing” of the Palestinians became central to the Zionist project (Segev 2001, p.405), and features as a recurrent theme throughout the sixty odd years of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. On occasion, the “disappearing” was quite literal, as exemplified by the work of Joan Peters (1984), who, with a huge display of research and erudition, purported to prove through a study of demographics and migration that the “Palestinians” were no more native to Palestine than the Zionist immigrants of the early twentieth century. She argued that they only arrived there in the immediately preceding years, attracted by the opportunities of work and prosperity created by the industrious Zionists already settled in Palestine. Peters’ writing out from history of the Palestinian people, though initially well received in America, was deemed academically worthless when the book came out in Europe (Finkelstein 2003b, pp.21-50; Hirst 2003, p.11).

For the most part, the inhabitants of Palestine were “disappeared” by not being recognised as in any way distinct from other Arabs of the mashreq region, or as a unified people regarding themselves as Palestinians. Moshe Dayan, for example, opined “I do not think that a Palestinian should have difficulties in regarding Jordan, Syria or Iraq as his homeland” (Kapeliouk 1975, p.32). Ben Gurion asserted that “the Jewish nation is not in Palestine and the Palestinians are not a nation” (Flapan 1979, p.134). Golda Meir

famously stated "It was not as though there was a Palestinian people in Palestine considering itself as a Palestinian people and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist." (Sunday Times, June 15, 1969) By her logic, the "Palestinian problem" was mere anti-semitic propaganda.

And Israeli actions were consistent with their words. The Abandoned Areas Ordinance and Absentee Property Regulations of 1948, enabling the confiscation and disposal of Arab lands in Palestine on the basis of somewhat unusual definitions of "absence" (Hadawi 1991, pp.165-7); persistent Israeli refusals to deal with the Palestinians or to accord them any negotiating role in various peace settlements (Cooley 1973, p.197); the more recent building of a gigantic wall to keep the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza literally out of sight, and therefore hopefully out of mind, are just three examples of the wilful blindness of Israel to the existence of the Palestinian people.

That Israelis and Zionists should prefer to acknowledge a status of non-existence for the Palestinians is perhaps understandable considering the fragility of and contention surrounding their own claims to the land of Israel. But they were not the only ones to exhibit a purblindness to the peoplehood of those Arabs who inhabited Palestine prior to the creation of Israel. The League of Nations mandate for Palestine, issued in 1922 and constituting the legal basis for British rule there, did not mention the Palestinians per se, referring to them only as "a section of the population", "natives", "non-Jewish communities" or "people and communities". By contrast, "the Jewish people" living in Palestine did merit specific reference (Khalidi 2006, pp. 32-33). Balfour, who had signed the 1917 Declaration committing Britain to support of the Zionist cause, openly acknowledged this bias in his view of British obligations in Palestine: "Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land". (Ingrams 1972, p.73)

This playing down of the rights, interests, and even legitimate existence of the Arabs in Palestine as being of secondary or negligible importance, has been attributed to a variety of factors. Nineteenth century “orientalist” views (Said, 1978) of the Arabs as backward, dirty, mentally aberrant, unhealthily sensual, and generally inferior, accorded with the racist sense of white western superiority that informed the unexamined assumptions behind the dispossessing projects of modern European colonialism (Said 1979). In addition, given the significance of the holy land to western Christianity, the west tended to view Palestine’s Arabs and Muslims, extraneous to preconceptions of the biblical setting, as aliens in their own land, thus symbolically dispossessing them of that land (Christison 2001, pp. 19-20). Finally, general ignorance with regard to the whole region and its history and inhabitants served to muddy the waters in the minds of the general western public, particularly in the far-removed United States. Thus a popular confusion between Turks and Arabs, together with the anti-Turkish sentiment generated by the first world war, served to impact badly on the way in which Arabs were perceived, despite the fact that their support had been critical in the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire (Christison 2001, p.38).

Palestinian Self-Perceptions

Regardless of the perceptions of others, how did the Arab inhabitants of Palestine see themselves prior to 1948? Did they regard themselves as Palestinians? Given that “history is written by the victorious” (Khalidi 1997, p.89), and rarely from the point of view of the vanquished, few sources deal with this perspective. The Palestinians for a long time had no audience, no “permission to narrate” (Said 1994); no lips, of the political sort, with which to whistle and make themselves heard above the louder Jewish story (Abu-Lughod and Sa’di 2007, p.10).

What is clear is that the Arab inhabitants of Palestine in the early twentieth century, emerging from the wide-reaching embrace of the Ottoman Empire, identified themselves according to a variety of collective groupings. They had many layers of loyalties, and a bewilderingly complex array of overlapping

allegiances and multiple identities, dependent on context: immediate family, clan (hamula), local community or village, Islam, Arabism, Ottomanism, as well as a choice of the various political or occupational organisations and associations on offer at the time (Khalidi 1997). Whether their devotion to or feelings about the land they lived in can be classed as nationalism in a modern sense, or are better thought of as “wataniyya”, a focus of sentiment, affection and nostalgia rather than of loyalty or primary identity (Lewis 1992; Sayigh 1997, p.xii), is arguable.

But Khalidi (1997) holds that the development of an undeniably distinctive sense of Palestinian identity, rooted in the notion of Palestine as a separate entity, a sacred holy land centred on the city of Jerusalem, can be traced, albeit sporadically and unevenly, from the times of the crusades through to the early twentieth century. Towards the end of the Ottoman Empire, the challenges of external threats, embodied in the Egyptian occupation of the 1830s, the late nineteenth century incursions of European powers, and the rise of Zionism, offered a focus of identity central to local Palestinian patriotism, one that began to cut across social divisions between the rural peasants and the urban notables. In addition, the simultaneous spread of education, and the rise of the press in the new urban centres of intellectual and business life, helped to reinforce this identity and strengthen “the imagined community” (Anderson 1991) of Palestine.

As Khalidi argues, while not perhaps qualifying as nation-state nationalism in its full modern sense, since the prerequisites for this simply did not exist at the time, this situation still presents a core collective Palestinian identity, a “community-as-nation”. He somewhat underestimates the obstructive role of the neighbouring Arab countries when he asserts that without this core collective identity, the Palestinians dispersed at the creation of Israel would simply have been assimilated by them. Moreover, he neglects to take into account the fact that the enforced accommodation of thousands of Palestinians in refugee camps could only have served to heighten any shared sense of common identity that went beyond the narrower identifications with clan and community. But his logic is flawless when he indicates that without this core collective Palestinian identity, the events of

1948 would not have constituted the significantly identity-damaging loss for the Palestinians that they actually did; ironically, to the extent that the shared losses of the nakba ultimately resulted in a fortification and strengthening of the previous core identity, bringing Palestinians even closer together in terms of collective consciousness.

The Loss

The analysis of grief in the first chapter highlights the key features of the loss that typically triggers the grief experience. It characteristically involves a radical change to the status quo, a dispossession in terms of both tangible and intangible elements of life that have previously been taken for granted. This change is perceived as identity-damaging, threatening the intactness of the person in cases of individual loss, or of the group where a collective loss is concerned. The greater the difficulty encountered by the loss-sufferer in allocating any meaning to this change in circumstances, the weaker the sense of basic security about being in the world that the loss situation engenders, the more traumatic the whole experience becomes. Scanning Palestinian history over the course of the earlier parts of the twentieth century, the question is to what extent any collective losses suffered by the Palestinian people can be said to fit these criteria.

Territorial Dispossession

In 1947, the population of Palestine is estimated to have been between 1.75 and 2 million people, with the Jewish component, the Yishuv, comprising some 30% of that total, ie. between 500,000 and 600,000. The Jews owned about 6% of the land, the remaining 94% being in Arab possession, although a proportion of that belonged to absentee landlords living in other parts of the Arab world. By 1949, two years later, the Zionists had appropriated for the new state of Israel an overall 78% of the land, leaving 22% for the Arab population. Between 800,000 and 900,000 of the total Palestinian Arab population of approximately 1.3 million had been displaced, with thousands

fleeing to the Arab-held West Bank (300,000) and Gaza (170,000), and thousands more to Lebanon (150,000), Jordan (100,000), Syria (80,000) and Egypt (7,000). Between 400 and 500 Arab villages disappeared forever, either physically destroyed or erased from memory by being taken over by Jews and renamed in Hebrew, while the demographic make-up of coastal cities like Jaffa and Haifa altered drastically with the mass exodus of Arabs. Of the approximately 800,000 Arabs who had lived in the area of Palestine now called Israel, less than 150,000 now remained. By the end of 1949, the Jewish population of Israel had doubled to a million as a flood of immigrants, mainly from post-war Europe, entered the newly-declared state.

Precise statistics for the period are not available, the British not having carried out a census since the 1930s. The population figures for 1947 Palestine are therefore based on informal mandate records from the different districts, which would not have captured various groups such as new immigrants or temporary workers, and which would also have included a certain element of estimated projection as regards annual population increase. The United Nations provided figures for the refugees, estimated at the time as being around three quarters of a million people, and later revised upwards by both the United Nations and the British. But most authoritative references to historical sources (Berry and Philo 2006; Flapan 1987; Gelvin 2005; Hadawi 1991; Harms and Ferry 2005; Hirst 2003; Khalidi 1997; Kimmerling and Migdal 2003; Lewis 1995; Morris 1987; Pappé 1992; Shlaim 2000; Smith 2007) would in general concur with the figures given above, any divergence in their respective accounts being in terms of relatively narrow margins.

Imprecise as these figures might be, they still give a clear indication of the cataclysmic change undergone by the people of Palestine within a brief period of time. In 1947, the United Nations, in order to deal with escalating Arab-Jewish tensions, had proposed a partition plan which would have divided the mandate territory of Palestine into three: 55% of the land for a Jewish state; 45% for the Palestinian Arabs; and Jerusalem to be administered by the United Nations as a separate unit. The Arabs rejected this proposal, and ended up after the ensuing wars with less than half of what

they had been offered, subsequently losing even that small percentage some twenty years later as a result of the 6 Days' war of 1967.

One Way Flight

Moreover, the way in which the exodus and dispersal of the Palestinian Arabs unfolded can only have compounded the traumatic nature of their territorial dispossession. Both phases of fighting in 1948, the initial civil war between the Arab and Jewish communities in Palestine, and the subsequent international war between the Arab armies and the newly-declared state of Israel, were characterised by the flight, expulsion and evacuation of Palestinian Arabs. During the civil war, the Jews put Plan Dalet into action, a strategic campaign to clear Arab villages on the coastal plain of "hostile elements" so as to ensure security for Jewish settlements. And as Haifa, Jaffa, West Jerusalem and other major towns and cities were taken by Jewish forces, the great majority of their Arab population fled or was expelled.

The international phase of the war saw the evacuation of Arab villages in areas where battles took place, and the mass exodus, during the short period of truce, of Palestinian Arabs to Arab-held territory or neighbouring Arab countries. The Israelis for their part expelled Arabs from land they conquered, and any Arab population remaining within their territory was shifted around according to perceived security requirements. By the time of the armistice agreements of 1949, the Arab population of Palestine lay fragmented, dispersed between Israel, the Jordanian-controlled West Bank, the Egyptian-occupied Gaza strip, refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt, and some, with the resources, education and contacts to travel further afield, in the Gulf States, Europe and the USA.

Whether the Arab flight from their home towns and villages was voluntary or forced, a subject of some contention in the literature, is not relevant to this argument. Pappe (2006) has called Plan Dalet "a blueprint for ethnic cleansing". Certainly, killings and massacres occurred, as at Deir Yassin,

where the cold-blooded abuse and murder of more than 90 men, women and children became emblematic of the darkest incidents of the wars. Morris (2008) has painstakingly recorded details of many such incidents of terror and massacre in Arab villages during 1948. But the contention arises over whether the exodus was “population transfer”, a premeditated Zionist intention, or whether it came about largely as a result of fear and panic spreading through the Arab population, a normal reaction to war exacerbated by accounts of atrocities like Deir Yassin. The evidence is equivocal, and the truth probably encompasses both motivations (Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, p.163; Lewis 1995, p. 364).

Arab Palestinian flight, whether forced, nudged or voluntary, took place for a variety of reasons, including “the threats, the bombs, the rumours of massacres, the death of close ones ... the fear of rape, the traditional ...anxiety about the loss of honor” (Al-Quattan 2007, p.203). Flight, however, is not to be equated with abandonment. In a land which had seen numerous communal and economic crises, most recently in the Arab Revolt of 1936-9, movement to home villages in the mountains had become an established pattern of self-defence for city and citrus plantation workers. The rich, for their part, would flee in troubled times to second homes in Lebanon, Jordan or Syria, which is precisely what the elite did in 1947 before the wars commenced. In the past, return had always followed as things calmed down, and the normal routines of everyday life would be resumed, albeit under a new regime or controlling power. The novel element this time was the Israeli ban on return, preventing Arabs from going back for any reason to the towns and villages they had evacuated. “For those accustomed to a pattern of leaving trouble through a swing door that would soon bring them home, the Israeli ban became a disaster” (Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, p. 165). Any attempts to return to collect belongings, tend to fields and crops, get the store of bridal gold that had been buried for safety in the garden, were regarded by Israel as infiltration, punishable by death.

This was the shock of the nakba; this was why “our exodus from the country in the year 1948 was a great surprise to us” (Jayussi 2007, p.120). Hitherto, tragedies had occurred *within* this world – deaths, losses, injustices,

massacres. But nothing had essentially happened to this world as a whole. Now, with no possibility of return to a way of life that had gone on, with some minor interruptions, for centuries, the carpet was literally ripped out from under Palestinian Arab feet. The reality they had known and come to take for granted was shattered; life could never be the same again.

An Unimaginable Experience?

Perhaps the nakba should not have come as quite such a surprise to the Arab population of Palestine. From the late nineteenth century, waves of Jewish immigration, along with increased Jewish acquisition of land and gradual replacement of Arab with Jewish labour, had become a fact of life in Palestine. Any hopes the Arab population may have entertained of British support for an Arab kingdom in the Middle East, in exchange for the assistance the Arabs had provided in the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire, were dashed by the Balfour Declaration of 1917, endorsing the aims of the Zionist project. The subsequent mandate period saw increasing conflict and tension, frequently erupting into violence, as the Arab and Jewish communities of Palestine grew progressively more polarised.

The violence escalated throughout the 1920s and 1930s till the Great Arab Revolt of 1936-9, which started as peaceful resistance through general strike action, but soon degenerated into extensive clashes between the Arab and Jewish communities, amidst Arab demands for democratic elections and an end to Jewish immigration. The British, with the active support of Jewish forces, instigated a harsh military campaign to break the rebellion, and, at the same time, the notion of partition was floated by the British government. Lord Peel's appeal to the Palestinian Arabs "Considering what the possibility of finding a refuge in Palestine means to many thousands of suffering Jews, is the loss occasioned by partition, great as it would be, more than Arab generosity can bear?" (Khalidi 1992, p. 90) fell on unreceptive ears, and the 1937 Peel Commission report proposing partition only served to inflame the situation and extend the revolt.

In 1939, with the rebellion quelled, and the MacDonald White Paper launching a new British policy for Palestine more in tune with the Arab position, the second world war broke out. British attention was now focussed elsewhere, and the Zionists began a campaign of sabotage and terror in Palestine against both the British and the Arabs. Post-war, international sympathy for the Jewish predicament, coupled with British preoccupations elsewhere in the Empire, led to increasing calls for partition as the solution to the "Palestine problem", and, in 1947, to Britain's decision to hand over its troubled mandate to the United Nations.

In hindsight, the seeds of what happened in 1948 are clearly visible in the events of the preceding decades. Khalidi (2006, p.23) views the nakba as a postlude to the defeat of the Arab revolt in 1939, as the outcome and conclusion of a series of failures that left the Palestinian Arabs leaderless and disorganised, no longer in control of their own fate, which was now in the hands of a nascent Israel, neighbouring Arab countries and a variety of international actors. But Nusseibeh (2007, p.45) highlights the inability to comprehend what was happening, to fit events into a familiar frame of reference, as he describes how, in 1948, the Palestinian Arabs "went into the fray with a great store of illusions and misplaced pride (they) had no shadow government ready to take over, no leader, no weapons, no armed forces....even more fatally, they had no clear understanding of what the fighting was all about. In the earlier rebellions against the Turks, territory was never the bone of contention. The Turks didn't take over a village in order to drive out its people and replace them with settlers. With the Zionists, the struggle was for every inch of soil".

Less than twenty years later, as a result of Israel's victory over the armies of Egypt, Jordan and Syria in the 6 Days' War of 1967, the entire territory of the former Palestine mandate came under Israeli control, including populations of about 650,000 Palestinian Arabs in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and some 350,000 in the Gaza Strip. As this acquisition was taking place, about 200,000 Palestinian Arabs, from within Israel as well as the West Bank, became refugees, either fleeing or being expelled into Jordan. Thousands of residents of the Gaza Strip were also forced to leave their homes. For many,

this was a second exodus, as they had originally sought refuge in the West Bank and Gaza after leaving their homes in 1948-9. Villages were destroyed. Attempts by villagers to return to their property, for whatever reason, were regarded as infiltration by the Israelis, and infiltrators were shot. (Hirst 2003, pp. 350-6; Morris 2001, pp. 302-46; Smith 2007, pp. 289-93) It was 1948 all over again: a second instalment, an after-shock, of the nakba, serving to give Israel authority over all of the territory of historical Palestine, and to completely reverse, from two decades previously, the proportions of the two communities, Arab and Jewish, that lived there.

Israel had also taken the Golan Heights from Syria and the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt in 1967, so that its borders now extended well beyond the original mandate boundaries. This new situation meant that the issue of Palestine's loss of territory to the creation of Israel in 1948 was no longer politically centre stage in the Middle East: the return of the territories occupied during the 1967 hostilities became the overriding concern. Land for peace was Israel's new bargaining chip, recognition and security being the price for the return to Syria and Egypt of the territories taken in 1967. Israel, it seemed, was now not only a fact on the ground, but also a force to be reckoned with.

The Multiple Losses of Territorial Dispossession

The collective significance of the deterritorialisation of the Palestinian Arab people in the nakba of 1948 was profound. As Grosby (1995) observes, territoriality is about much more than physical space: it encompasses the "life-ordering and life-sustaining significance of a space" (p.149), the network of social relationships and framework of meanings in which life is conducted, the collective consciousness of the people living in that space. Even in the case of nomadism, and some of the inhabitants of Palestine, certainly in the Negev area, could have been classed as nomads, the norm in this part of the world was one of "enclosed nomadism" (Rowton 1974). This implies a clear, persistent attachment to a particular locality, and an established link between nomadic tribe and sedentary town within that locality. To deprive the Palestinians of their territory was not just to take away their land; it was to

take away everything that gave form, structure and sustenance to their daily existence in both tangible and intangible ways.

Many of them lost, in material terms, their homes, their land, and the livelihood which that land had assured them. A not insignificant number had lost loved ones and extended family members, killed in the violence or exhausted by the stresses of conflict and flight. The dispersal and fragmentation of the population entailed the loss of the whole fabric of society which had underpinned life in the region over centuries: differences of class, wealth and background were to some extent levelled by the exodus for those who left (Khalidi 1997, p.194), and by the new Israeli masters for those who stayed; different branches of clans and of extended families found themselves separated from each other, living in distant, often mutually inaccessible locations (Humphries and Khalili 2007, pp. 215-23).

Collective memory was tied up with the land and the society that lived in it. As Nusseibeh (2007, p. 43) writes of his father's objections to partition, it "wasn't just about a piece of real estate to be haggled over at the UN; what was at stake was his heritage, stretching back well over a millennium". Pappe (2006, pp.225-34) refers to the "memoricide" involved in the nakba, with the eradication or Hebrew renaming of Palestinian villages literally erasing their history and replacing it with another. Slyomovics (1998) offers a detailed account of this phenomenon in her work on the history of the village of Ein Hod, previously the Arab Ayn Hawd.

Not only the collective past, but any collective hopes or aspirations for the future were also affected. In 1948, several historic processes were playing out in the region; the formation of independent national states; the emergence of a distinct Arab state system; and the replacement of colonial domination by US-Soviet rivalry (Sayigh 1997). The Palestinians might, in other circumstances, have hoped to benefit, like their neighbours, from these processes, but their aspirations for any form of statehood were thwarted by their collective dislocation. They lost the potential to operate as independent actors, surrendering agency to the Israelis, their Arab neighbours and interested world powers. Far from achieving statehood, they now faced the

challenge of retaining any sense of collective consciousness as a people, fragmented as they now were into “the refugees, the remnant and the occupied” (Said 1979).

The situation of territorial dispossession entailed the loss not only of political agency but also of basic freedom of movement. Palestinians were now guests, often unwelcome, in neighbouring Arab lands, or subject to the rule of other states, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, in what they had previously considered to be their own land. “As outcast, as transnational, as extraterritorial being, as oppressed nonentity inside Israel” (Said 1979, p.169), they lost the previously taken-for-granted ability to travel around, both in their own territory and to others. It is because of this that Khalidi (1997, p.1) locates the “quintessential Palestinian experience” at borders, checkpoints, and barriers, all the places where identities are checked and verified and where movement is controlled.

Finally, in terms of effects on the Palestinian collective consciousness, the events of the nakba must have led to a loss of trust, both in others and in themselves. The British had walked off from their mandate responsibilities and left them to their fate at a critical point; their fellow-Arabs had come to their aid, but slowly, in disorganised fashion, some with dubious motives, and ultimately ineffectively; the international community, as represented by the United Nations, America, and the European powers, seemed unwilling or unable to give attention to what was going on, or to understand the Palestinian Arab perspective on events.

In addition, trust in their own capacity to maintain their honour, a key value in Arab society (Nydell 2006, p.150), must have been dented by the events of the nakba, since Arab male honour is totally bound up with “the possession of land and the maintenance of kin women’s virginity” (Hasso 2000, p. 495). Interestingly, the loss of honour implied by the events of 1948 is signified by the common use of the term “al ightisab” (the rape) to refer to the nakba; as well as of metaphors of rape to characterise the loss of the homeland to an aggressive, invading Israeli enemy, these perhaps also masking occasions of actual rape that occurred during the course of events (Slyomovics 1998, pp. 302-46; Slyomovics 2007, pp. 37-8; Pappé 2006, p.211).

Hirst (2003, p.398) provides examples of articles from Fatah's early magazine "Our Palestine – the Call to Life", produced in Beirut from the late 1950s and addressed to "the children of the nakba", in which land and honour are clearly linked. They contain statements like "the loss of land and honour moulds you in the crucible of the nakba"; "the land... whose loss we deem not merely material, but, above all else, a national dishonour, a badge of ignominy and shame". It was clearly this same sense of dishonour that reverberated for a lifetime with Abu-Lughod's father in his story of how, fleeing Jaffa by ship in 1948, a Belgian sailor on board confronted him with the words "How could you leave your country?" (Abu-Lughod 2007, p. 90) A sense of shame at having permitted themselves to suffer these losses, a lack of trust in their own abilities to live up to their values and preserve their honour, would appear to have been not uncommon as a result of the territorial dispossession of 1948, and of the significant rupture that dispossession represented in terms of Palestinian self-perceptions and of the overall framework of meaning which structured their lives.

The Emotional Reaction

History and Emotions

In chapter two, attention was drawn to the fact that there would not be much history without emotions, since these serve to motivate human behaviour and foster the formation of social groups and movements. History, however, tends to deal with events and characters rather than emotional experiences, leaving emotional content as implicit, or brushing over it in a few words. Sayigh (2007) observes how most writing about the Palestinian nakba is in this tradition of "history", which she describes as a Euro-American mode of writing about the past, dependent on knowledge of "facts" and chronology, and aimed at a rational "knowing" or "seeing the world". She advocates "heritage", by contrast to "history" a more experiential mode of "being in" the world (Daniel 1996), as more inclusive, catering for the voices of women and rural populations, who are normally excluded from "history" by its very nature. Her research with the individual stories of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon is

based on this “heritage” approach, and highlights emotional aspects of the nakba and of subsequent refugee existence as experienced and recollected by women in the camps. Similarly, relevant art forms, particularly the wide field of Palestinian “resistance poetry” (Darraj 2006; Parmenter 1994; Suleiman and Muhawi 2006, pp. 31-99), or the relatively few films dealing with the nakba (Bresheeth 2007), would seem to place greater emphasis on the emotional quality of the happenings of the time than historical accounts.

The individual “heritage”-type story or the artistic representation can no doubt appreciably add to the picture of the emotions involved in historic events, but may ultimately give no more complete or accurate a view of the collective emotional aspects of these events than can be inferred from historical accounts in mainstream texts. All of these sources are subject to the same moulding by memory, and, in addition, to the pressures of academic or artistic genre, tradition and trend, which are bound to come between the felt emotions and their subsequent recall and representation. While recognising that all experience is mediated in this way, historical accounts can still be usefully scanned for clues that might give some indication of the emotional climate or atmosphere prevalent amongst particular groups of people at specific points of time. These clues might lie in specific actions taken, in the way in which events and actions are described, or in the particular language used by protagonists and authoritative commentators at the time of the events in focus.

For the purposes of the arguments of this dissertation, indications are sought of the major emotional reactions associated with grief, as outlined in chapter one. While remembering that emotional display is variable across cultures, it seems generally accepted that an initial lack of emotion, a numbness or confused sense of disbelief is a general feature of the grieving experience. Subsequent to this, there ensues an emotional turmoil, encompassing sadness, yearning, self-reproach, guilt, anger and so on, a mix of emotions essentially characterised as negative. These may not all occur, and those that do are unlikely to present themselves in a linear, orderly progression. Rather, the oscillation between a backward-looking orientation to what has been lost and a forward-looking motivation to get on with life (Stroebe and

Schut 1999), as part of a process “that reflects the realisation of loss, on the one hand, and the fight against the reality of loss, on the other” (p.202), implies a somewhat unpredictable shifting between seemingly contradictory emotional states.

The Initial Disorientation

The emotions surrounding the nakba itself are explicitly referred to in several narrative accounts, which mention the mass fear and panic elicited by its events. Kimmerling and Migdal (2003) talk of the general Palestinian “fear of what the Jews would do to them” (p.163). Hadawi (1991) quotes Glubb Pasha, the British commanding officer of the Arab Legion, when he describes the Palestinians leaving “in panic flight, to escape massacre” (p.95); and he also refers to Childers’ research on Arab radio broadcasts of April 1948 that explicitly acknowledged the spread of fear and consternation amongst the Arab population of Palestine (p.96). The very act of the mass Palestinian hurried flight, leaving behind possessions which many later tried to retrieve, and, in several cases, even losing sight of close family members while fleeing (Humphries and Khalili 2007, p.222), indicates a heightened atmosphere of panic and alarm pervading the events of 1948.

But once the panic had subsided and the conflict and flight were over, the Palestinian Arabs, with the armistice of 1949, found themselves facing a new reality. They were now fragmented between the newly declared State of Israel, the Transjordan-controlled West Bank, the Egyptian-ruled Gaza Strip, and various refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. Moreover, those finding themselves outside the territory now called Israel were banned by the Israeli government from returning there for whatever reason. Their collective world shattered by their territorial dispossession, the Palestinian people entered what appears to be a period of bewildered disorientation. Kimmerling and Migdal (2003) refer to these years, from 1949 to the mid-sixties, as “the crucial disorienting period” (pp.216-7). Khalidi (1997) talks of “the lost years, with no centre of gravity” as a period of hiatus in Palestinian identity (p.178). Abu-Lughod and Sa’di (2007, p.9) refer to the experience of

the nakba leaving the Palestinian people “in disarray, politically, economically and psychologically”. And as Fatah, in its “Our Palestine – the Call to Life” magazine of the late 50s and early 60s, was later to remind the “children of the nakba”, they had from 1948 till that point in time “remained scattered, without honour, or personal or collective identity” (Hirst 2003, p.400).

While a “forced public amnesia” (Bresheeth 2007, p.175) regarding the nakba and loss of the pre-nakba world might be expected in the case of the remnant of Palestinians left in the newly declared state of Israel, an apparent loss of memory or inability to verbalise the situation seems to have been more widespread. Karmi (2007), discussing the experiences of Palestinian men who had been in the forced labour camps set up by the new Israeli state from 1948-55, describes the phenomenon as follows, “It was as if no-one could articulate for years the enormity of suffering that the experience of loss, insecurity and dislocation had caused. So people got on with the business of survival and did not look back” (p.20).

Reduced by the events of the nakba to a level of “bare life” (Agamben 1998), the Palestinians concentrated on strategies for survival. For the most part, once basic food and shelter were secured, these centred on education. As Aburish (1988, p.129) observes “Details of our reasons and reaction to the defeat (of 1948) have been given and they differ, but a single response came out of it: educate, educate, educate”. The Israeli military success was perceived as due to superior levels of education and organisation, factors which the Palestinians now saw as holding the key to their own suddenly precarious future. In the refugee camps, UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency), established in 1949 to supply humanitarian assistance to their inmates, took on responsibility for the provision of basic education, in response to general demand, along with healthcare and social welfare.

These early years of dispossession for the Palestinians, characterised by fragmentation, bewildered confusion and an apparent inability to fully articulate their suffering, can be viewed as reflective in many ways of the immediate post-loss period of disorientation and emotional numbness typical of the grief experience. Grief theory identifies this initial response as an

interim coping measure, serving as protection from the full overwhelming impact of the loss (Stroebe et al.1993). Moreover, the practical preoccupation with survival during this period falls into the category of “problem-focused coping” (Stroebe and Schut 1999), implying an avoidance of any confrontation with feelings.

The Emotional Turmoil

A variety of emotions emerged in the wake of the initial shock of the nakba, and these presented themselves perhaps most intensely in the refugee camps, where the Palestinians were contained as separate units, segregated from their host societies. There was sadness and nostalgia, a yearning for what had been lost, expressed in many ways: the retention of the original Palestine house keys as almost sacred family heirlooms; the planting of trees from the original Palestinian garden at the door of the camp dwelling (Pappe 2006, p.184); the insistence of families from one generation to the next that their provenance was a specific village in Palestine, and not a camp in an entirely different area or country (Hass 2000, pp.150-84; Karmi 2007, p.227); the recounting of personal memories to an extent that certain images of the pre-nakba world were never forgotten, but passed on as an “imagined geography” to the next generation (Shammas 1995; Slyomovics 1998). Each of these acts can be viewed as a manifestation of a collective emotional climate of nostalgia, each occurrence of such an act in turn contributing to the maintenance of that climate (see pp.74-5 above).

This longing for the land that had been lost took on a collective form in the concept of “The Return” (al awda), discussed at some length in the next section of this chapter. This notion became an obsession, suffusing Palestinian poetry and novels for decades (Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, pp.135-7; Parmenter 1994), and reinforcing a seemingly stubborn determination to hang on to the past. The consequent refusal to accept camp life as anything more than a temporary arrangement (Hirst 2003, p.393) informed not only quotidian life but also the politics of exile. Hadawi (1991, p.136) quotes the 1965 Commissioner-General of UNRWA’s recognition of

this general climate of yearning in the camps, "Their longing to return home is intense and widespread (it) remains unabated".

Along with this sorrow and clinging to the past, there also appears to have been a collective Palestinian embitterment, encompassing a hatred for the Israeli usurpers, and a sense of betrayal as regards their Arab neighbours and the world at large, particularly the western powers, who had let the catastrophic events of 1948 happen (Hadawi 1991, p.136; Hirst 2003, p.396; Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, p.233). This bitterness doubtless also derived from feelings of humiliation caused by the camp life degradations of poverty and powerlessness (Hadawi 1991, pp.137-8). Thus UNRWA, established to provide the refugees with support and alleviate their hardship, was not altogether favourably regarded, since a proud and formerly self-sufficient people considered it demeaning to accept charity, particularly at the hands of an international community seen as partly responsible for allowing that hardship to come about in the first place, and of an international agency whose very existence reinforced the potential permanence of their predicament. To add to the sense of embitterment and humiliation, there was also the self-reproach and shame involved in the perceived dishonour of being unable to prevent their territorial dispossession from taking place, already referred to in the previous section of this chapter (pp.126-7 above).

As time passed a whole generation grew up in this emotional climate, imbibing through everyday social interaction the sorrow and longing, humiliation and bitterness that appear to have characterised it. And the rise of this new generation seems to have been accompanied by the rise of a collective sense of anger in the camps, along with a growing realisation that the Palestinian people would have to be responsible for their own futures, since no-one else seemed willing to shoulder that burden for them. The subsequent armed struggle, represented by the rise of Fatah and, eventually, the PLO from the early 1960s, can be seen, in grief theory terms, as indicating a collective shift in a more future-oriented direction, an attempt to reconstruct the collective world, or, in Sayigh's (1997, p.668) terms, "the beginning of the search for the suppressed and subjugated identity".

The generation which had witnessed the nakba as teenagers and young adults and had lived through an emotional climate of sadness and embitterment, chose to turn these into a more positively directed, identity-affirming anger, thereby aiming to regain a place in the world for themselves and also some of the dignity and pride their parents' generation had surrendered. This anger fuelled a powerful new sense of Palestinian nationalism that developed in the late 1950s and 1960s: "We only desire life insofar as life enables us to begin the battle for our land, our earth, our freedom and our dignity" (Our Palestine, September, 1964, cited in Hirst 2003, p.399). Ironically enough, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1967, after their victory over the Arab armies in the 6 Days' War, united these two Palestinian blocs under Israeli military rule just as this renewed sense of national purpose and identity appeared to be gaining ground amongst the Palestinian people, channelled through and centred on the activities and personalities of the PLO.

The different emotions characterising the collective Palestinian emotional climate in the years following the nakba are broadly similar to those listed in the descriptions of the grief experience outlined in chapter one: sadness, yearning, self-reproach, powerlessness, despair, anger and so on (see p.29 above). The anger, however, is a later feature in the case of the collective Palestinian reaction: it does not seem to appear in alternation with the other emotional states like sorrow and self-reproach as part of a general emotional turmoil, but rather arises from them or replaces them at a later stage in the grieving. Perhaps in this instance, the anger can be regarded as an example of the collective power which can be energised by grief: the Palestine liberation movement succeeded in harnessing the potential for agency contained within a newly emergent Palestinian collective identity fashioned by the shared experience of loss and grief (see p.59 above).

In addition, shame, humiliation and hatred do not figure among the emotions commonly associated with grief in the theoretical literature, although they are clearly part of the emotional climate in the Palestinian post-nakba situation. The last, of course, provides a useful outlet for the negative feelings surrounding loss in cases where it is possible to attribute causative agency

for that loss to somebody else, whether justifiably or not. And the occurrence of the self-conscious emotions of shame and humiliation can perhaps be attributed to the fact that honour is a more central value in the Arab world than in the western societies where grief theory was developed. .

Multiple Losses and Incremental Grief

Since 1967, the emotional climates associated with the Palestinian people, both taken as a whole and within their geographically separate collectives, seem to have oscillated between extremes of despair and hope, frustration and optimism, anger and resignation, throughout the various cycles of peace processes and road maps. Each time a positive forward-looking move is made, or even anticipated, hope and optimism rise, and when that move is, almost inevitably, thwarted, pessimism and despair hold sway. For example, accounts of the eruption of the first intifada suggest an emotional climate encompassing anger, hope and determination. Hass (2000), in her portrayal of everyday life on the Gaza Strip in the late 1980s and early 1990s, describes how “rage finally washed over Gaza” (p.41) in December 1987, as word spread around the community regarding the successes of different forms of rebellion. Chomsky (1999), writing of his experiences in the West Bank during this period, describes a mood “higher than the wind” in the occupied territories: “The sentiments are common, expressed without rhetoric or anger; people lacking means of self-defence, having endured much suffering and facing more, have stars in their eyes, and a sense of inevitable victory” (p. 491). Kimmerling and Migdal (2003) refer to the “revolutionary fervour” and “self-reliance” (p.300) that characterised this intifada.

Post-intifada, a few years later, the residents of the Gaza Strip are described as “totally abandoned, increasingly helpless, and very fearful Daily life is impossibly oppressive and people genuinely despair of protection.” (Roy 1991, p.67) Sacco’s extraordinary comic books series (2001) on the occupied territories at the end of the first intifada captures, with a poignant mix of humour and humanity, the minutiae of oppression in such a way as to convey, without the need for recourse to words, the atmosphere of

frustration, humiliation, hopelessness and desperation permeating everyday Palestinian life. Yet only a couple of years after that, in 1994, there is once again “optimism in the air” (Hass 2000, p. 103), this time surrounding Arafat’s return to set up the Palestinian Authority in Gaza, and manifesting in a carefree environment where men freely play football in the streets and mixed bathing beach outings take place in the evenings.

As time moves on in the Palestinian narrative, the emotions evoked and described can no longer be said to be directly elicited by the nakba of 1948. But in a very real sense, all of the subsequent losses are related to that original event, all of the subsequent emotional reactions to that original loss, “the very first link in a chain of loss that goes on” (Hass 2000, p.352), thereby forming a “continuity of pain” (Bresheeth 2007, p.161), “a long-running sore of dispossession” (Karmi 2007, p.231). In grief theory terms, this situation suggests the concept of “incremental grief”, originally developed by Cook and Oltjenbrun (1998) to describe how lack of congruence in grieving among bereaved family members can change the relationships between them, leading to further loss in the form of breakups. Such a grieving experience is complicated by “the additive factor of grief due to multiple related losses” (p.160), the primary loss serving to precipitate other losses, so that the overall effects are cumulative, with an escalation of problems and an intensification of emotional reactions.

Making Sense of the Loss

Central to the grief experience, as outlined in the first chapter, is the attempt to make sense of, and attribute some coherent meaning to, the post-loss world. This involves, at the national level, the reconstruction of the collective narrative, a picking up of the threads broken by the disruption of the loss and a reweaving of them into a credible, continuing story, along with the reformulation of collective identity on the basis of that story: “The story is the anchor for identity – personal and national” (Bresheeth 2007, p.174). For the

Palestinians, post 1948, this might seem an insurmountable task, given their geographical dispersal and the need “to rebuild their sociological space” (Sayigh 1997, p.666). But, ironically enough, the shared experience of statelessness and exile seemed to bind them, forming the glue of their “imagined community”, and providing the basis for a new, stronger, national story, “the narrative that would connect Palestinians to one another in their minds.” (Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, p.394)

The Lost Paradise

This story first focussed on what had been lost, looking to the past and to life in an idyllic pre-nakba Palestine. The village and the happily close-knit rural community were central to this vision. But cities too were remembered as places of unusually harmonious peace, love and brotherhood, somewhat in contradiction of the many recorded instances of tension and violence between the various confessional and ethnic groups on the ground. The olive tree, the vine, the crops, fig, almond and lemon trees, rich soil, fragrant orange blossom and roses, all figure frequently in post-1948 poetry (Parmenter 1994, pp. 70-85); as do the minutiae of routine daily life in rural farming communities. The same images figure in numerous individual accounts of how this collective memory of Palestine was transferred from one generation to the next. Hass (2000, p.150), for example, writes of Abu Ali, born in a refugee camp, who “had assimilated all his parents’ memories, down to the colours of the wheat and corn, the sight of the plums and oranges and grapes, the smell of the fertile earth”; and Shammass (1995) recounts how a Palestinian refugee grandmother would tell her American Palestinian granddaughter about the fragrant lemon tree in her garden in Jaffa, which for her symbolised all she had lost in 1948. This rurally idyllic conception of pre-nakba Palestine is referred to by Kimmerling and Migdal (2003) as the “Lost Garden”, while Gelvin (2005, p.156) terms it “Palestine as Paradise Lost”.

The loss of this pastoral paradise was viewed from a perspective of victimisation, as a sort of cosmic injustice meted out against the Palestinian

people. The frequent use of the term “al hijra” to denote the exodus of 1948 underlines the cosmic dimension of the expulsion, since this is the word used of the forced migration of Mohammed with his followers from Mecca to Medina, breaking away from his tribe in order to set up the first Islamic state. In the new Islamic calendar, this was the first day of the first month of the first year. For the Palestinians, the nakba similarly marked the beginning of an epoch.

Victimhood, even of a cosmic status, needs victimisers, and blame was immediately cast on the Israelis as the villains of the piece. This soon widened, however, to include the neighbouring Arab nations who had failed to protect their Palestinian brothers, the British who had walked off from their mandate responsibilities and left them to their fate, the United States who had unwaveringly backed Israel, and the world at large which seemed indifferent to the Palestinian predicament. Khalidi, however, balances this view by arguing that the Palestinians themselves must shoulder some of the blame for the chronicle of failures that culminated in the nakba. He highlights (1997, pp.180-92; 2006, pp.1-139) the lack of leadership, judgement and organisation within pre-1948 Palestinian society, and criticises the inability of the elite to foresee or forestall the problems Zionism might create. To borrow Said’s (1996, p.27) succinct phraseology, where the Israelis had the plan, the Palestinians had the wish.

And that wish in the post-nakba years was for paradise regained. Hirst (2003, pp.392-7) describes the mystique of “The Return” and its various modes of expression, particularly in the refugee camps where the destitute majority of the Palestinian community-in-exile lived. There was “the masochistic obstructionism of the camp dwellers”, involving automatic rejection of projects aimed at improving their lot if these smacked of rendering their temporary status more permanent. There were “the camp rituals and regalia”, whereby the decoration, ceremonies and titles appertaining to schools and other community organisations were infused with references to Palestine and the determination to get back there. And there was “poetic fancy”, the passionate declaration of intent to return that permeated both Palestinian poetry and the militant rhetoric of many Arab regimes. At a later stage, the “right of return”

became both a political demand and a moral statement, but, in the early post-nakba years, “al awda” was essentially an expression of longing for what had been lost.

Ways were found for keeping the lost world of Palestine alive, several already touched on in the preceding section of this chapter. Keys to the Palestine house and original Palestinian birth certificates were passed on from the nakba generation to the next (Abu-Lughod 2007, p.77). Trees and plants from the original Palestinian garden were planted by the camp home door (Pappe 2006, p.184). The inhabitants of many of the refugee camps were organised according to their original Palestinian village-based communities, and, within those communities, along clan and family lines; they would be recognised, down the generations, as having come from a specific village in Palestine, even if actually born in a camp in Lebanon (Karmi 1999, pp.55-6; Karmi 2007, p.227; Sacco 2001, p.167). Memories of the original village, from its sights and sounds to its physical layout and daily routines, were passed on inter-generationally through stories and family talk. In later years, and where possible, older children would be taken to see where that village had been, and given a guided tour, even if the village was completely erased by the time of the visit (Sacco 2001, p.15). And, before the nakba generation dies out, their detailed memories have been recorded in village memorial books (Slyomovics 1998; Davis 2007).

This phenomenon relates, in grief theory terms, to the notion of continuing bonds, a recognised part of the grieving experience whereby the bereaved find ways of remaining connected to the deceased (see p.21 above). Through the investment of effort in memory work, their relationship continues beyond death. In a similar way, the Palestinian community might be regarded as finding various means of creating such continuing bonds with their lost land. Through the operation of collective memory, a representation of Palestine was developed and maintained in the collective consciousness, a place found for it in the collective sense of self. Lacking any apparatus of state, in the form of an education system or organised media, to conduct a transfer of collective memory, the Palestinians achieved it largely through the channel of the family, in which the nakba generation “reared their

descendants on a detailed knowledge of their towns and villages of origin in the old Palestine” (Karmi 2007, p.227). Thus the perceptions of Palestine as a lost paradise, of the Palestinians as a people unjustly expelled thence, and of the Israelis as representative of the demonic forces responsible for the expulsion, persisted in the collective Palestinian consciousness over many years.

The Armed Struggle

Towards the end of the 1950s, a new paradigm emerged: armed struggle aimed at recapturing the lost paradise. The Palestinians by now realised they could rely only on themselves to do something about their situation, and that action had to replace talk and lament. Fatah grew out of this understanding. By 1964, Arafat and his Fatah co-founders had assembled the nucleus of a guerrilla organisation, based in Syria and enjoying wide support across the Palestinian diaspora. In 1965, it began a campaign of attacks, initially the sabotage of military infrastructure, within what it regarded as the occupied territories. The goal, as declared in the Palestinian National Covenant of 1964, was the elimination of Israel from those territories: “Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine (Every Palestinian) must be prepared for the armed struggle and ready to sacrifice his wealth and life in order to win back his homeland” (cited in Hass 2000, p.116).

This spirit of sacrifice was exemplified by the battle of Karameh in 1968, when three to four hundred Fatah guerrillas stood firm at Karameh refugee camp, near Israel's eastern border, against a reprisal Israeli attack comprising some 15,000 men and a substantial number of tanks. In this first battle between Jews and Palestinians since 1948, the Palestinians lost five times as many fighters as the Israelis, but the latter failed to achieve their objectives and were forced to withdraw. (Berry and Philo 2006, pp.61-2; Gelvin 2005, p.199; Hirst 2003, pp.411-4; Khalidi 1997, pp.196-7; Smith 2007, p.312) Karameh was a psychological and political victory for Arafat and Fatah. The myth of the fedayeen, the heroic warrior, was established, and a revolutionary fervour swept through the refugee camps, and through the

youth of the greater Arab world, resulting in volunteers flocking to Fatah recruitment centres.

The Palestinian story was taking a new turn, one that involved the restoration of both agency and dignity (by coincidence, *karamah* means honour or dignity in Arabic). By turning failure into triumph, and defeat into victory, the Palestinians could begin to make some sense of their troubled past. Though still largely absorbed in that past, this was a new and forward-looking orientation. The generation which had been in their formative years at the time of the *nakba* took matters into their own hands, reacting to the victim-status passivity of their parents, but still with the image of Palestine in their minds. Their identity as Palestinians was now based on “loss plus liberation from nonentity, oppression and exile” (Said 1979, p.135). And the Israeli victory in the Six Days’ War of 1967, resulting in Israel’s acquisition of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, served to concentrate their focus on the reunited territory of the former Palestinian mandate, now all under Israeli occupation.

For the next twenty years, the PLO, the centre of gravity for Palestinian nationalism, operated in exile, first from Syria, then Jordan, Lebanon and Tunisia. As the non-territorial equivalent of a state, it came to be recognised internationally as representative of the Palestinian people. And despite various internal problems between its different factions, an inevitable degree of friction with the people and governments of its successive host countries, and increasing criticism of the violent methods used by some of its elements to attract world attention to the Palestinian cause, the PLO succeeded at an international diplomatic and political level in driving forward the idea of a formal Palestinian state. The narrative of armed struggle thus proved to be a source of both political legitimacy and national identity for a dispersed people lacking a single territorial, social and economic base. It provided a common political arena around which a broad constituency could be mobilised.

Palestinian Statehood

During the period of PLO ascendancy, the focus of the struggle shifted perceptibly from a backwards-looking preoccupation with return to the lost paradise, to a future-oriented aspiration to the establishment of a Palestinian state. Said (1979, p.179) talks of a growing realism, a coming to terms with the situation, that resulted in greater political effectiveness. The shift was substantial, from the 1964 Palestinian National Covenant which aimed at restoration of the status ante 1948 and the eradication of Israel; through the utopian vision of a democratic, unitary Palestinian state, where Arab, Jew and Christian would live side by side, endorsed at the 1970 Palestinian National Council and elaborated on in Arafat's famous 1974 gun and olive branch speech to the United Nations; to the acceptance of a two-state solution, announced at the 1988 Palestinian National Council session in Algiers, recognising Israel as a fact on the ground, and declaring an independent state of Palestine in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. From a declared intention to reclaim all of their land, the Palestinians were now conceding most of it by settling for pre-1967 rather than pre-1948 borders. Over twenty years the armed struggle had arrived at compromise, accommodating political realities. The Palestinians seemed to be adapting to the post-loss status quo, and moving on with a view to the future.

The clamour for a Palestinian state became more urgent, and its focal point moved back to the occupied territories with the outbreak of the first intifada in 1987. This grass roots movement, starting in the refugee camps of Gaza and spreading quickly through the Strip and into the West Bank, was born of frustration and exasperation at two decades of Israeli occupation and the attendant personal, economic and social hardships. Years of restricted movement, diminishing employment prospects, the suppression of political activity, and increasingly punitive encounters with both Israeli settlers and the military, had taken their toll. "People were asking hard questions, not just about their political future but about their very existence. They were asking how much their lives were worth" (Hass 2000, p.49).

There was increasing disillusionment in the occupied territories with the capacity of the political process, as typified by the various peace accords, and of the PLO, with its various rival factions, to make a substantive difference to everyday life or to drive out the occupying power. Popular, collective action now replaced the quasi-military approach; the warrior with his arms and explosives was superseded by the youth throwing stones, a fresh generation's response to the Palestinian predicament. It was still struggle, but a wide-spread democratised struggle, no longer in the hands of a few fedayeen, but engaging all sections of Palestinian society. And its aim was not a return to some lost paradise of the early twentieth century, but the freedom to live normal lives in the bit of land they had now. The very word "intifada", which means "shaking off" as a dog might vigorously shake drops of water from its coat after getting wet, gives a sense of the power and the felt natural justice of this rebellion.

Arafat, though like everyone else taken by surprise at this sudden turn of events, was quick-witted enough to align the PLO with the intifada, thus providing more leverage for his subsequent negotiations over a Palestinian state. The Oslo Process ensued, leading to "a peace that buried 1948 and its victims" (Pappe 2006, p.24), and that saw the establishment of Arafat and his Palestinian Authority in the occupied territories in 1994, in what looked at the time like a first step towards the achievement of independent Palestinian statehood.

Stalled Progress

The Palestinians seemed to have "moved beyond a sense of victimisation and debilitating nostalgia" (Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, p.351) and into a future of self-determination: they had started "the inevitable march towards statehood" (Hirst 2003, p.22). But that progress appears to have stalled. Two decades later, the Gaza Strip is universally recognised as a large, overpopulated prison camp, teetering on the edge of an economic and humanitarian abyss. Palestinians in the refugee camps in Lebanon are still politically and economically disadvantaged, living in a stateless twilight zone.

The West Bank is a cantonised series of Palestinian towns and communities, cut off from each other by a matrix of roads linking Israeli settlements, and separated from Israel by the recently-constructed security wall. Israeli Arabs are still largely second-class citizens within Israel. And diaspora Palestinians have no easy access to relatives living in the West Bank or Gaza. There is still no freedom of mobility for Palestinians and, for many, no change in their political, economic or social status since the 1980s. For some, particularly in the Gaza Strip, the situation has markedly deteriorated.

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to expand on what hampered progress, to detail the failures of the Oslo Peace Process, the reasons behind the second intifada, or the errors of judgement which rendered Arafat's Palestinian Authority increasingly less credible as the energising force for a new state. The asymmetrical power relations of the US-led Oslo negotiations; the apparent determination of Israel to continue founding settlements in the occupied territories; the internal political situation in Israel which swung the right wing Sharon, associated by Arabs with Sabra and Shatila, the refugee camps in Lebanon where Palestinians had been massacred after the Israeli invasion of 1982, into power at a crucial moment; the barely alleviated conditions of occupation despite the agreement to self-rule and the establishment of the Palestinian Authority; the complete destruction by the Israelis in 2002 of the nascent state infrastructure painstakingly built up by the Palestinian Authority since 1994, were all contributory factors.

So too was the inability of the Palestinians to solidly unite in a vision of the way forward. Sayigh (1997, p.23) notes the duality in Palestinian nationalism between the path of compromise and openness and that of denial and preoccupation with the past. Arafat's concession in the Oslo Process, for example, literally ceding the 78% of Palestine lost in the 1948 nakba, was not universally welcomed by his compatriots, especially when it resulted in no discernible economic or social benefits for the vast majority of Palestinians. Meanwhile, Hamas, in 1988, at the beginning of the first intifada, had declared their aim of regaining the whole of Palestine as a holy land sacred to the Muslims. By the time of the second intifada, in 2000, their stance had

increased in popularity, particularly in the overcrowded and underprivileged Gaza Strip. For a generation brought up in a state of mental war with Israel, the shahid, the martyr of the suicide bombings, replaced the feday, the heroic warrior of Arafat's generation. The struggle to recover the lost paradise of Palestine was now being seen in terms of Islamic jihad rather than militant nationalism.

This tension between past and future orientations, between holding on to what is lost and accepting the new post-loss situation, is central to the dual-process model of grief (Stroebe and Schut 1999). The norm is for the two orientations to gradually shift balance over time from a predominant focus on the past to an ever greater focus on the future, until the past is, if not largely forgotten, at least integrated meaningfully and non-detrimentally into a fully functional new status quo. For many Palestinian individuals, this may well be the case, exemplified by Israeli Arabs integrated into Israeli society, Palestinian refugees integrated into Jordanian society, and, amongst the younger generation in Lebanon's refugee camps, attempts to acquire foreign passports so as to integrate into some European society (Allan 2007, p.274). But for the vast majority, the collective core, of the Palestinian people, the grief trajectory appears to have stalled. They know they cannot go back. But they cannot go forward either. The path to any meaningful, normal, collective future in economic, social and political terms appears to be blocked, with attempts at collective meaning-making stuck between memories of the past and unrealised aspirations for the future.

Nevertheless, the Palestinian people are still there. At the creation of Israel the Zionists may have seen the Palestinians as a minor irritation and temporary inconvenience, imagining that within 60 to 80 years of the initial "transfers", they would all have left, or been absorbed by neighbouring Arab countries (Berry and Philo 2006, p.111). Given the pan-Arabist ideology that was at its height around that time, this was perhaps not an unjustifiable calculation. Contrary to all expectations, however, they have continued, displaying the tenacity and perseverance of the "samid" (the steadfast or resilient one) (Shehadeh 1982). Even those elements of the diaspora whose families left Palestine long ago, and who are thriving in Europe or the US,

display strong bonds of sentiment with their country, their compatriots and their heritage. The Palestinian people may be stuck in their grief trajectory between an irretrievable past and an unrealised future, but they definitely and markedly exist, arguably stronger as a nation now because of the shared loss and grief arising from the nakba. As Said observes, “we have recreated ourselves as a people out of the destruction of our national existence” (1979, p.233).

Context and Consequences

Meanwhile, the larger context within which this Palestinian history played out could scarcely be considered conducive to supporting their collective adaptation to a post-nakba world. Two important factors recognised as contributing to resilience in dealing with grief are the presence of social support and the absence of concurrent stressors (see pp.40-1 above). An examination of the regional and global contexts surrounding the events of 1948 and the subsequent experiences of the Palestinian people, as detailed in the following pages, would seem to indicate rather the opposite: a lack of support and a variety of stressors. The predicament of the Palestinians, often their very status as a people, has been largely ignored or misunderstood at an international level, while their plight has afforded their regional neighbours numerous opportunities for manipulation and manoeuvring. The relationship with Israel, and the significance of this relationship within a broader global framework of political interaction, has had a consistently negative impact on Palestinian efforts to move forward. Their progress towards practical accommodation with the post-nakba world has been effectively blocked by what amounts to an international disenfranchisement of their grief, an unwillingness or inability to recognise the full severity and impact of their original loss and its ongoing effects and consequences.

The Mandate Period

During the mandate period, the British consistently played down or ignored the rights and interests of Palestine's Arab population (see pp.115-6 above). Having solicited Arab support in bringing down the Turks with indications that independence might be granted in exchange, the British secretly drew up with the French the Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916. This divided the spoils of the former Ottoman Empire between the two colonial powers, an arrangement ratified at the 1920 San Remo Conference. (Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, pp. 82-4; Khalidi 2006, pp. 95-8; Smith 2007, pp. 82-9) The subsequent League of Nations mandate for Palestine, incorporating the Balfour Declaration, made explicit the aim of establishing a Jewish homeland there. Many British Jews were appointed to senior administrative positions in the mandate government, including Herbert Samuel, the first British High Commissioner in Palestine. 1920, marking the beginning of the British civil administration in Palestine, has been described as "a year with an evil name in the Arab annals" (Antonius 1946, p.312), since it saw a British colonial grip on the country, a dashing of Arab hopes for self-determination, and the emergence of a policy of intensive Zionist development.

Palestine was anomalous within the system of British and French mandates in the region. Others had a king, president or prime minister in nominal authority under the colonial power's high commissioner, thus recognising the independent sovereignty of a nascent state supposedly under only temporary foreign control. In Palestine, the British High Commissioner was the sole source of authority. Moreover, unlike other mandates, none of the top appointees of the administration in Palestine, apart from in the judiciary, were ever Arabs. And while the Jewish Agency was guaranteed quasi-official status under the mandate, enabling the development of a political, economic and military infrastructure in the yishuv, the Palestinian Arabs were provided with no such opportunities to evolve their traditional social and economic structures (Hadawi 1991, pp.42-63; Khalidi 2006, pp. 31-64; Pappé 2006, pp.13-9).

While British views on the ground became increasingly sympathetic to the Arab position, the government in London, mindful of domestic political considerations, remained committed to support of the Zionist cause as the main reason for its imperial presence in Palestine. But as tensions in Europe grew throughout the 1930s, with the ascendancy of Nazism in Germany and Italy and the build-up to the second world war, the government had to rethink its position. Palestine was considered strategically essential to continuity of oil supplies, and to military support for the defence of Egypt and the Suez Canal, should war break out. Equally important was the co-operation of the Arab world once war began, and the harsh British treatment of Arab Palestinians in the 1936-9 Revolt was not exactly conducive to that. Hence it was only with the Macdonald White Paper of 1939 that any official British acknowledgement was given to Arab complaints about the increasing Zionist presence in Palestine.

World War Two

The immediate post-mandate period saw the world powers too preoccupied with their own interests, and the new Arab regimes too distracted by their own struggles towards stable self-determination to pay much heed to the Palestinians. With the British war focus on Europe and Japan; Palestine's role as a haven for Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Europe; the Zionist campaign within Palestine to drive the British out; the new involvement of the United States government with Zionism and the plight of European Jews, setting it in opposition to British policy in Palestine; and the war-weakened British domestic economy compelling a review of all its imperial responsibilities, the burden of colonial power in Palestine had become too much for the British to bear. The post-war Labour government handed the issue over to the United Nations. .

While a weakened and impoverished Britain declined from its powerful position on the world stage, America was in the ascendant. The Zionists had cannily foreseen this change in the international order, lobbying and promoting their cause in the United States since the first world war, and

America had been supportive of the British mandate's nurturing of a Jewish homeland in Palestine throughout the interwar period (Christison 2001, pp. 26-60). With the problem of how to provide a safe haven for European Jewry fleeing Nazi persecution, immigration into Palestine became an Anglo-American issue. President Truman, with an essentially Zionist frame of reference, and mindful of the Jewish vote, requested the British to allow vastly increased Jewish immigration into Palestine (Christison 2001, pp. 61-94; Smith 2007, pp. 187-93). The British, economically reliant on the United States after the war, could not afford to alienate them.

There was a degree of continuity between British mandate and US policy in Palestine, in that both were formed largely on the basis of self-centred strategic and domestic political interests. But, if anything, America, the first country to recognise the new state of Israel, within a few minutes of its declaration in 1948, proved to be even blinder to the situation of the Palestinian Arabs than the British had been. At least the British had experienced the Palestinian situation first-hand during the mandate administration, whereas the Americans had only media images, Zionist propaganda, and their own preconceived notions, perceptions and prejudices about Arabs to go on (Christison 2001).

Meanwhile, by the end of the second world war, Palestine's Arab neighbours were achieving their long-awaited status of self-determination, and their new, independent regimes were staggering shakily to their feet. King Abdullah of Jordan, his eye on the West Bank territory of Palestine, was negotiating with the Zionists over its acquisition in exchange for allowing the emergence of a Jewish state while, at the same time, telling his Arab brothers he would lead the Arab armies into Palestine against the Jewish enemy. In the event, in 1948, the Jordanians only fought the Jews at Jerusalem, which they wanted to acquire for themselves. Iraq, having thrown in its lot with the Axis powers at one point of the war, but later retaken by the British, was going through a period of political instability, marked by a series of popular uprisings and a quick succession of governing regimes. Both Egypt and Syria were equally unstable, with coup after coup in Syria, and an increasingly unpopular King Faruq on the Egyptian throne until Nasser's bloodless coup of 1952. The

attention and energies of these countries were largely turned inwards during the post-war years, though this did not prevent a sense of rivalry between them in competition for leadership of the Arab world (Lewis 1995, pp. 348, 372; Smith 2007, pp.236-9). The ideal of pan-arabism, having peaked during the period of struggle against imperial control, was declining in strength and appeal, the leaders of these new Arab states being reluctant to surrender any of their independence (Lewis 1995, p. 374).

The Cold War

With the period of the cold war, from the early 1950s to the late 1980s, the whole of the Middle East became a theatre for the playing out of US and Soviet tensions, fears and anxieties (Berry and Philo 2006, p.43; Gelvin 2005, pp. 228-30; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp. 88, 104; Lewis 1995, pp. 369-70; Smith 2007, pp. 282-5). The Suez Crisis of 1956 established the US as a major player in the region when, in the interests of cold war containment, it stopped British and French action against Nasser's Egypt. But American support was more consistently over time behind Israel, which came to represent for the US a bulwark of democratic western values in the region, a strategic asset which would maintain a balance in a volatile, but vital, given western reliance on middle east oil, part of the world, and which would help to moderate both Soviet and radical adventurism. Billions of dollars of American financial and military aid poured into Israel over the years, and diplomatic support was granted through the numerous US vetoes on UN resolutions aimed at reining in Israel's behaviour towards the Palestinians.

The USSR, meanwhile, was providing military and economic assistance to Egypt, Syria and Iraq. Egypt, with its strategic control of the Suez Canal, benefitted the most, and Soviet support probably contributed to Nasser's confidence in the initial stages of the 1967 crisis that led to the Six Days' War. By the early 1970s, however, both the US and USSR had respectively declared their intentions to do nothing to exacerbate the situation in the Middle East, and superpower involvement in the region thus simultaneously served as containment while preventing any real movement towards a

solution. With Sadat's Egypt now moving along its own separate peace track with Israel, the focus of the Arab-Israeli conflict moved in the mid 1970s to Lebanon, where both Syria and Israel became embroiled in the long civil war.

The Palestinians did not figure large in this cold war scheme of things. For the Americans, they were mainly an irritant, an annoyance to their Israeli protégés, and of negative value in ensuring the security of oil supplies from the Middle East. For the Soviets, they came across at best as an ideological symbol, a useful representation of armed struggle to inspire the militant rhetoric of their own protégé regimes, and a source of motivated guerrilla fighters willing to goad the US-backed Israelis and act as a check on Israeli expansion.

Fatah, later the PLO, was largely a pawn of the various Arab regimes. Starting off based in Syria, it subsequently moved to Jordan, thence expelled by King Abdullah when he felt his own authority increasingly challenged by its presence on his soil. Then, ensconced in Lebanon and integrally involved with the civil conflict there, the PLO progressively alienated the Lebanese people, who felt that their own never-ending troubles were largely attributable to the Palestinian parastatal presence in their midst. In 1982, after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and its occupation of the south, the PLO was once again expelled from its host country, and the leadership moved to Tunis.

The UN, for its part, had regarded the Palestinian predicament for over two decades as basically a refugee issue. Security Council Resolution 242 of 1967 demanded a just settlement of the problem, along with the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied during the Six Days' War. In 1969, the UN General Assembly recognised the "inalienable rights" of the Palestinian people, and underlined the denial of those rights resulting from Israeli policies and practices. This position was reaffirmed over the next few years, and in 1974 the General Assembly explicitly recognised that the Palestinian people were entitled to self-determination, turning the Palestinian question from a refugee problem into a political issue. However, whether as political issue or refugee problem, the pattern remained the same. The UN would release statements and resolutions criticising Israeli policy and action, demanding

Israeli withdrawals and backdowns, insisting on Palestinian rights, but, on the ground, these achieved virtually nothing, since the Israelis, with their powerful US backers, appeared to simply ignore them.

The Palestinian losses of 1948 went essentially unrecognised amidst the cold war preoccupations of the superpowers and the jockeying for power amongst the rival regimes of the region. Moreover, a global community which paid lip-service to these losses, but failed to back words with meaningful action, could only be perceived by the Palestinians as indicative of a hypocritical international disinterest in their predicament, or of a toothless UN, powerless in the face of western, particularly US, interests and support for an Israel that was “essentially a rhetorical tool provided by the west to harass the Arabs” (Said 1979, p. 88).

The War on Terror

During the 1980s, two major influences in regional and global affairs came to bear on the Palestinian situation. Firstly, the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 gave rise to a militant Islam that spread throughout the Middle East, and led to the increased popularity of the Muslim Brotherhood, and then Hamas, in the occupied territories, along with a reinterpretation of the Palestinian struggle within an Islamic context. Secondly, the implosion of the Soviet Union at the end of that decade ended the cold war and ushered in a new era of freedom and hope for many. The Oslo Peace Process, leading to the Oslo Agreement of 1993, was initiated within that atmosphere. Global public opinion began to reflect greater interest in the humanitarian aspects of the Palestinian predicament. Any admiration formerly accorded to the Israelis, as part of the Jewish holocaust story, began to decline, as they came in for more frequent criticism in the global media for the perceived disproportionate heavy-handedness of their actions against the Palestinians and their Arab neighbours.

And then, at the turn of the millennium, in the middle of the second intifada, 9/11 happened, and a whole new paradigm emerged as a context for the

Palestinian issue: the “war on terror”, pitting the liberal west against the muslim east. Israel's prime minister of the time, Ariel Sharon, was quick to identify Israeli security issues with Islamic terrorism of the Al Qaeda variety, aiming to strengthen his country's bonds with the west. Osama bin Laden, in his taped messages to the west, invariably had two main requests: the departure of westerners from the Islamic holy places, and restitution of justice for the Palestinians. The net result was that the Palestinians were now, for many in the west unfamiliar with the details of their history, associated with Islamic jihad, with the terrorism of some archetypal religious conflict. Once again, the Palestinian cause had been hi-jacked and exploited to serve other people's interests, their essential state of dispossession resulting from the original losses of 1948 ignored, forgotten, or at best misunderstood by great swathes of the world at large.

Summary

To what extent and in what ways does the history of the Palestinian people from 1948 to the present day reflect the features of a collective national grief trajectory? Pre-1948, the Arab population of Palestine was not a formal nation, but there does seem to be sufficient evidence of a “community-as-nation”, of a growing sense of collective identity resulting from both the spread of education and the press, and from opposition to external challenges, including the nineteenth century Egyptian occupation, the increasing threat of Zionism, and the pressures of the British mandate. The nakba of 1948 seriously damaged this collective identity. Its territorial dispossession of the Palestinian Arabs involved not only loss of land, but also of the way of life, the fabric of society, the heritage of the past and aspirations for the future associated with that land. Moreover, the experience was rendered even more traumatic by its unfamiliarity and unexpectedness: never before had the people of Palestine been prevented from returning to the homes they had left during a time of crisis.

When it comes to collective emotional response to this loss, evidence is thin on the ground, largely due to the rational and fact-focussed nature of the

historical writing genre. But there do appear to be indications of a post-loss period of inarticulate numbness, bewilderment and disorientation, typical of that associated with the grief experience. In its wake, a variety of emotions, including sorrow, nostalgia, self-reproach, shame, bitterness, humiliation, hatred and anger, can be identified from descriptive statements, autobiographical comments, and the specific nature of actions taken at the time.

Intergenerational emotional responses can also be seen in the various ways in which the Palestinian people tried to make sense of their post-loss predicament. The nostalgic sorrow for what had been lost manifested in the collective memory of pre-nakba Palestine as an idyllic rural paradise. Anger subsequently transformed this longing for return into armed struggle, a determination to regain paradise by force. The combative approach gradually gave way, as accommodation was made with reality, to political aspirations for statehood. These shifts occurred neither in a straight line nor as unified moves, but rather in a constant and contended oscillation between a backwards-looking preoccupation with the past and a future-oriented desire to move forward. Moreover, although there have been several points over the last two decades when it seemed that the forward impetus was in the majority ascendant, progress has invariably stalled.

The regional and global contexts in which the Palestinian story has played out have been an important contributory factor to this blockage. The losses of the Palestinian people, their subsequent grief and suffering, and, at times, their very existence as a community, seem to have been ignored at best, exploited at worst. Their grief has been largely disenfranchised by the wielders of power and influence in the global community. As a result, it has become incremental, with loss piled on loss, and suffering on suffering. Yet the Palestinians continue, if anything with an arguably stronger national identity resulting from their shared experience of territorial dispossession, exile and statelessness.

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5. ISRAEL: A NATION BUILT ON GRIEF?

“Fear is uncertainty in search of security.”

(J. Krishnamurti, On Fear)

This chapter explores the twentieth century Jewish experience, particularly in relation to the holocaust of the Nazi regime and to the creation of the state of Israel as a Jewish homeland. That experience is approached from a grief trajectory perspective, focussing, as in the previous chapter, on the fundamental elements of the grieving experience, namely: the identity-damaging, grief-triggering loss; the subsequent emotional reaction; the attempts at making sense of the post-loss world; and the ongoing interactions of the wider context surrounding both the loss and its aftermath.

Initially, the very notion of a Jewish people is explored with a view to whether Jewry can be considered a group with sufficient collective consciousness to render meaningful any discussion of communally shared experience. Without favouring a definition of Jews in either specifically ethnic or religious terms (Sand 2009), the question examined is whether and in what ways, despite their geographic dispersal, they might be described as having a collective identity, as constituting an “imagined community” (Anderson 1991), in the earlier part of the twentieth century leading up to the outbreak of the second world war.

The Nazi holocaust of the war years, in which six million Jews are estimated to have died in an industrial-scale programme of extermination, and which effectively wiped out East European Jewry, is viewed as a culmination of previous historical losses, the climax of an ongoing narrative of marginalisation and victimisation. On this basis, it can be regarded as representing the ultimate loss of the basic right to exist, of any expectation of even such a “bare life” (Agamben 1998), in terms of isolation, oppression and hardship, as had become the lot of many European Jews. Historical evidence is presented for what might be construed as emotional reaction to this loss, and as attempts to make sense of it, on both a collective and an

intergenerational level, with Israel featuring prominently in the meaning-making necessary to coming to terms with a post-holocaust world.

Finally, there is a review of the international and regional contexts in which this Jewish experience played out, exploring how and to what extent these influenced the specific outcomes and consequences of the interactions between, initially, European Jews and the world they lived in, and, subsequently, the state of Israel and its neighbours, friends, allies and enemies in the twentieth century global village. Tracing these consequences up to the present day, it might be concluded that collective grief, in the Jewish case, has perhaps served to create a state; but the jury is still out on whether it has built a nation.

The Nation

At the beginning of this century, there were reckoned to be over thirteen million Jews in the world. Of these, more than six million live in Israel, six million in North America, a million in Western Europe, with the rest distributed over a variety of countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America (della Pergola 2003). A century earlier, world Jewry was assessed at around eleven million (Jewish Encyclopaedia 1901-6: 11.2 million; American Jewish Year Book 1904-5: 10.9 million). But the distribution of that population was very different: Europe accounted for nine million, with five million living in Russia and (Russian) Poland, and almost three million in Central and other Eastern European regions, including Austria, Hungary, Germany and Romania; one and a half million lived in North America; and the remainder were spread mainly around North Africa and the Middle East.

Figures for such globally dispersed populations are notoriously unreliable. For instance, the Encyclopaedia Britannica of 1881 estimates world Jewry of the time at six and a half million. Kimmerling (2001, p.21) authoritatively presents a figure twice that for the end of the nineteenth century, noting the growth from a population of three million at the beginning of that century. While he terms this "one of the most unprecedented demographic increases

known to history”, it is perhaps fair to say that it might as easily be attributable to the difficulty of retrieving accurate information, and the resultant statistical inaccuracy and error. What is indisputable, however, is the fact that at the beginning of the twentieth century, over 80% of the world’s Jews lived in Eastern Europe, and, by the end of it, almost 50% lived in Israel, about 45% in North America, and any significant Jewish population within Europe now resided in the west rather than the east.

The Jews in Europe

Such mass movement was not unprecedented for the Jews, who had been expelled variously from England, France, Spain and Portugal during the course of the preceding three or four hundred years (Gilbert 1987, p.19; Smith, 2007 p.32). They had been tolerated in the west as a minority, usefully networked throughout Europe, providing vital financial and diplomatic services to princely nation-states. In the sixteenth century, however, an increasingly urbanised Christian middle class began to view them as competition and they were forced into moving to Eastern Europe, where they continued to perform the same roles in a society that remained essentially feudal and agrarian in nature until capitalist development took hold in the nineteenth century. Once again the Jews were rendered economically superfluous, also having suffered an increasing loss of functionality in diplomatic terms as the emergence of nationalism and imperial competition changed the nature of European foreign policy. Their position consequently diminished to the point of vulnerability in the new European bourgeois societies, where they came to be perceived as a self-preserving marginal group, defined by their wealth and their Jewishness. (Arendt 1951, pp.11-53; Rubenstein 1982, p.135)

To some extent the Jews voluntarily detached themselves from their host societies, many communities choosing to remain separate and distinct in preference to integration. But they were equally “othered” and treated as a people apart, traditionally viewed throughout Christian Europe as the deicidal Christ-killers, accused from medieval times of killing Christian children and

baking their blood into Passover bread (Gilbert 1987, p.19; Gelvin 2005, p.57). Isolation, oppression, persecution and expulsion were commonplace features of European Jewish history. In Tsarist Russia, Jews were mainly confined from the end of the eighteenth century to the Pale of Settlement, a frontier zone of the Russian Empire designated as territory for Jewish settlement (Gelvin 2005, pp.38-9; Gilbert 1987, p.19; Harms and Ferry 2005, p.49; Smith 2007, p.33). In other parts of Europe, they were socially organised around exclusively Jewish urban ghettos (Gelvin 2005, p.36; Gilbert 1987, p.19).

By the nineteenth century, such communities were largely dismantled in Western Europe. The influence of the French and American revolutions had led to the organisation of Western European nation-states on a more voluntaristic basis, with citizenship a civil contract between state and individual. In this context, Jews enjoyed a degree of socio-political emancipation that enabled fuller integration into society. Their path was eased for assimilation, secularisation or even emigration to the economic opportunities of North America (Harms and Ferry 2005, p.48; Gelvin 2005, p.37; Gilbert 1987, pp.19-21; Kimmerling 2001, pp.20-1; Smith 2007, p.33). But the fact that anti-semitism still lurked in this brave new nineteenth century world was demonstrated by the infamous Dreyfus case of 1894, involving a young Jewish officer blatantly scapegoated by the French military authorities for the treasonable passing of official secrets to the Germans (Bredin 2010; Gelvin 2005, pp.49-50; Rose 2005, p.113; Sand 2009, p.254; Sternhell 1998, pp. 10, 12, 51).

In Central and Eastern Europe, meanwhile, the enduring national model was more organic, based on blood ties, kinship and myths of ancient origin. This ethnic bias entailed exclusivity, and the Jews, as the archetypal "other", were denied any level of integration, remaining isolated and discriminated against in society (Halper 2008, pp.74-81; Sand 2009, pp.46-7). In the 1880s, there began in Russia a wave of popular pogroms against the Jews which would continue until the onset of the first world war. Between 1881 and 1914, some two and a half million East European Jews, shocked and frightened by these latest outbreaks of virulent anti-semitism, transited through Germany to the

west, most eventually ending up in the United States, some in South America or South Africa, and a small percentage in Palestine (Kimmerling 2001, p.21; Smith 2007, p.34; Sand 2009, p.253).

Anti-Semitism

In the Europe that emerged from the first world war, Jews, who had fought against each other within the various European armies involved in the conflict, now found themselves under new flags and with new national allegiances. But anti-semitism endured across these new frontiers, and the persecution and killings of Jews started up afresh in Poland, the Ukraine, Lithuania and Galicia in the immediate aftermath of the war (Gilbert 1987, pp.22-3). In a defeated Germany, there were murmurings that the Jews were to blame for the national humiliation, this viewpoint entering the political mainstream, when Hitler, campaigning for his National Socialist party in 1920, demanded “the removal of the Jews from the midst of our people” (quoted in Gilbert 1987, p.24). The subsequent rise of Hitler and the Nazis, and German expansion within Europe, led to increased discrimination against and persecution of Jews in Central and Eastern Europe. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935, forbidding Jews any further role in German life and denying them any meaningful function as citizens of the German state (Gilbert 1987, pp.47-8; Novick 2000, p.21), sanctioned such behaviour as official policy and legalised segregation.

It is clear from the above that, by the earlier part of the twentieth century, there was widespread experience of discrimination and persecution amongst European, particularly East European, Jews, as well as a collective history of separateness and “othering”. Despite the lack of a common culture, language (although Yiddish was commonly spoken by much of East European Jewry), or national allegiance, this shared history of victimisation and suffering must have served to bind together, with ties of vulnerability, fear, and mistrust of the non-Jewish world, an otherwise disparate Jewish community. As Herzl, one of the founders of Zionism, observed in 1896 “We are one people. Our enemies have made us one in our despite” (quoted in Rose 2005, p.26).

The vexed issue of whether Jews are to be defined on an ethnic basis, as members of a group derived in a direct bloodline from the biblical tribes of the Israel of antiquity, and wandering the world in a two-thousand-year divinely ordained exile ever since (Gilbert 2008, p.3; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.13-19; Kimmerling 2001, pp.17-20); or whether they are to be categorised in religious terms as converts to and adherents of a major world belief system that itself originated in the Middle East (Sand 2009), is beside the point in this context. For the Jews of Europe could be said to have been essentially defined by anti-semitism, their collective consciousness to a great extent informed and developed by their experience of being distinct and “othered”, and by their consequent vulnerability to oppression and persecution. Arendt (1951, p.7) would argue that they to some extent even defined themselves in terms of anti-semitism, those Jews who were concerned with their people’s survival in the face of the threats of “physical extinction from without and dissolution from within” seeing it as “an excellent means for keeping the people together, so that the assumption of eternal anti-semitism would even imply an eternal guarantee of Jewish existence”.

Zionism

There were different reactions amongst European Jewish communities to their precarious and degenerating collective situation. The religious approach was to see value in suffering and patiently await redemption (Harms and Ferry 2005, p.47; Rose 2005, pp.22-4; Rubenstein 1978, pp.68-77): as God’s “chosen people”, the Jews should attend to their spiritual lives and tolerate the conditions, however unpleasant, of their material ones. The secular approach was adaptation or assimilation, compliance with the norms of the dominant society so as to blend in, keeping their “heads below the parapets in an osmotic coexistence” (Shindler 2008, p.11). Ahad Ha’am’s cultural Zionism proposed the establishment of a spiritual and cultural base in the Land of Israel which would counteract this by reinvigorating the diaspora and acting as a bulwark against the dangers of assimilation (Gilbert 2008, pp.39-40; Rose 2005, pp.99-100). But increasingly, from the end of the nineteenth

century, and directly influenced by the rise of European nationalism, there was a move towards self-determination, the securing of a homeland, a safe haven specifically for Jews. This manifested in political Zionism, which, although it professed the dual aims of protecting Jews from oppression and of preserving them from assimilation (Lewis 1995, p.347; Pappe 2006, p.10; Shindler 2008, pp.10-12; Sternhell 1998, p.12), could be seen as a form of assimilation in itself, embodying Jewish aspirations to become a “normal” nation like others (Rose 2005, p.70).

Several locations were proposed over time for this homeland, including Argentina, Australia, Uganda, and an area on the Russian-Chinese border (Shindler 2008, p.12, p.163), but Palestine became the clear favourite, largely due to its associations with the biblical past of Judaism and the divinely decreed destiny of the Jews. Several ultra-orthodox Jewish groups, mainly from Poland and Lithuania, had already emigrated there in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, well in advance of those Jews who, fleeing the Eastern European pogroms, ended up on the shores of Palestine between 1881 and 1914 (Gilbert 2008, pp.3-5). The latter were to swell the numbers of an estimated Jewish population of about 10,000 residing in Palestine in the middle of the nineteenth century (Gilbert 2008, pp.3-4), and were to change the nature of that community, as families escaping oppression and seeking a better life, along with committed socialists in search of opportunities to establish a more just society, began to outnumber the original religiously motivated immigrants (Gelvin 2005, p.67; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.61-2; Shafir and Peled 2002, p.38; Shindler 2008, pp.17-19).

This expanding Jewish community, the Yishuv, organised themselves efficiently over the first decades of the twentieth century, becoming almost a state-within-a-state during the British mandate period by creating and developing strong administrative and community infrastructures, especially in the areas of agriculture, industry, education and defence (Gilbert 2008, pp.37-57; Karsh 2000, pp.73-179; Kimmerling 2001, pp.65-7; Stein 2003; Sternhell 1998). And their numbers kept on growing: a population of between 60,000 and 80,000 prior to the first world war (Berry and Philo 2006, pp.3-5; Harms and Ferry 2005, p.64; Khalidi 1997, pp.94, 96; Smith 2007, p.31) rose

rapidly during the British mandate period to over 150,000 in the 1920s (Berry and Philo 2006, p.9), and, in a wave of immigration of “what can only be described as invasion proportions” (Khalidi 1992, p.33), to some 400,000 by the late 1930s (Sternhell 1998, p.79). These numbers, however, were small in comparison to the well over two million Jews estimated to have arrived in the United States from Europe between 1881 and the end of free immigration in the 1920s (Berry and Philo 2006, p.1; Gelvin 2005, p.43; Shafir and Peled 2002, p.38; Sternhell 1998, p.79).

To summarise on Jewish collectivity, any reference to the Jewish people in the early twentieth century cannot be in terms of a nation with a shared language, culture, history or territory. Beyond religious belief, and various traditions and rituals associated with that belief, such as attachment to Talmudic Law, devotion to Jerusalem – “Next year in Jerusalem” being the traditional wish expressed at the end of the Passover meal, and the concept of deliverance from exile (Sand 2009, p.250), the geographically dispersed Jewish communities of the world had little in common. There were universes of experience separating the Jews of Baghdad from the Jews of Warsaw, the Jews of Morocco from the Jews of Poland, and the Jews of Ethiopia from the Jews of the United States of America. What can be said is that the vast majority of the world's Jewish population at the time were European Jews, Ashkenazim, living in both Europe and North America; and that the majority of those lived in Central and Eastern Europe. This majority, as “the historical products of cruelty” (Rose 2005, p.113), shared a collective experience of marginalisation, oppression and victimisation over several centuries of European history. Loss and suffering had played a large part in forming their collective identity.

The Loss

Collective loss, for the European Jews, had been a long, slow burn of a process, taking place over several hundred years. There were many short, sharp shocks of major catastrophe along that time-line, such as the massacres of Jews in Germany and France during the first crusade (Baron 1957; Golb 1998); the expulsions from England (Mundill 1998), France (Einbinder 2008) and Spain (Perez 2007); the Ukrainian massacres of the seventeenth century (Gilbert 1987, p.108); and the Russian and Ukrainian pogroms around the turn of the nineteenth century. But, essentially, the dispossession and desecuritisation of the Jews was a long-drawn-out, semi-permanent state of affairs, and one the Jews seemed to have learned to live with. "The lesson from history was extreme vigilance" (Shindler 2008, p.23). They had developed coping strategies, both physical and spiritual, relentlessly regrouped and survived, albeit in a constant state of alertness and with a continual awareness of suffering as the basic condition of life, "pain", as Herzl observed, its "basic feeling" (Rose 2005, p.64).

The rabbinic imperatives to submit to a higher will and endure the tribulations of a not-to-be-questioned path to a divinely decreed destiny, may have been deeply embedded in the Jewish psyche, but the messianic spark had gone out of Judaism to some extent after the failure of Shabtaism, a messianic movement of the seventeenth century (Chamish 2005; Rose 2005, pp.2-5; Scholem 1976), leaving the Jewish people "essentially adrift in a world whose course no longer made sense" (Rose 2005, p.9). Hence the Jews of Eastern Europe responded to the virulent anti-semitism at the turn of the nineteenth century in ways that were time-honoured, but also characteristic of the secular spirit of the times. Of those who were in a position to do so, many chose individual or family redemption as a response to persecution, seeking security through emigration in search of a better life, or in assimilation within their host countries.

The Holocaust

In the first half of the twentieth century, the cycles of catastrophe which characterised “The Jews’ unenviable journey through history” (Shindler 2008, p.46), took on a new momentum. If the Jews thought they had endured suffering, they had, quite literally, seen nothing yet. For the rise of Nazi Germany, and its policies of the eradication, ultimately the extermination, of the Jews of Europe, brought centuries of oppression and victimisation to a climax. The Jews now faced complete annihilation, carried out with a chilling industrial efficiency which only the twentieth century could have produced, and aimed at a final, once-and-for-all solution to the apparently interminable “Jewish problem” in Europe.

There are many readily available histories which provide detailed and thorough accounts of the holocaust and of the events leading up to it. (eg. Berenbaum and Peck 2002; Bergen 2009; Botwinick 2009; Caplan 2008; Dwork and Van Pelt 2003; Engel 2000; Gilbert 1987; Longerich 2010; Neville 1999; Wistrich 2001) Once Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in 1933, the way was clear for furthering his National Socialist Party’s aim of eliminating Jewish influence from all aspects of German life. The Jews, along with gypsies, communists, criminals, mental and physical “defectives”, and homosexuals, were seen as superfluous, if not detrimental, to the interests of the German state in its drive to build a superior, pure, exclusively Aryan society.

The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 legitimised various forms of discrimination against Jews, including their dismissal from public positions and the boycotting of Jewish businesses. Official segregation and the expropriation of Jewish property and businesses soon followed, and, with German expansion in Central and Eastern Europe, an ever-larger population of Jews became subject to these policies of inequity, exploitation and general humiliation. Jewish emigration from the territories of the Reich was actively encouraged during the 1930s, and tens of thousands left each year. But in 1940, when the Germans found themselves engaged in full-scale European war, and in rapid occupation of much of Western Europe, their policy began to change.

The transfer and containment of Jews in ghettos, mass killings of Jews on the Eastern front, and trial gassings in the backs of lorries, were to become commonplace procedures until the Wannsee Conference of 1942 formalised the “final solution” and established the definitive infrastructure for the extermination of Europe’s Jews.

The actual numbers of Jews who died in the Nazi camps, or of Jews who survived them, will never be known. Both categories may well be subject to “inflationary revision” (Finkelstein 2003a, p.83) for a variety of motives. But there is general agreement amongst all major sources that between five and six million Jews perished, variously gassed, shot, starved or worked to death, as a result of the murderous actions of the Nazi regime. Novick (2000, p.20) points out that this figure must be seen in the context of a global conflict that ultimately killed between fifty and sixty million people. Gilbert (1987, p. 824) estimates that, along with the six million Jews, the Nazis murdered more than ten million other non-combatants regarded for a variety of reasons as enemies of the Third Reich, arguing that although the Jews may have been the primary target of Nazi racial purification policy, they were by no means the only victims of Nazi intolerance and cruelty.

However, when viewed from a specifically Jewish perspective, in the context of a world Jewish population standing, only thirty years before Hitler’s rise to power, at some eleven million, nine million of these in Europe, the numbers are devastating. The extermination of six million represented the annihilation of more than half of world, and two thirds of European, Jewry, and involved the complete eradication of East European Jewry. Moreover, the German defeat had not necessarily brought peace or security for those Jews remaining in Europe. The attempts of some camp survivors to go back to their pre-war “homes” resulted, particularly in Poland, in anti-Jewish riots and the killings of returning Jews. The majority of survivors ended up in the “displaced persons” camps, awaiting the opportunity for relocation to the United States, Western Europe, or Palestine.

Loss of Ontological Security

The collective history, in Zionist terms, of the two thousand year long period of Jewish exile following expulsion from the land of Israel is regarded as “a long, dark period of suffering and persecution a recurrent history of oppression, punctuated by periodic pogroms and expulsions, of fragile existence imbued with fear and humiliation” (Zerubavel 1995, p.18). The Jews of Europe had long lived with the insecurity created by such conditions and by the lack of a stable base from which to lead their lives. In this, they were doubtless helped by the fact that “uprooting and deportation are concepts deeply embedded in Jewish tradition” (Sand 2009, p.129), since Judaism defines the human condition as a state of exile from the divine source in metaphysical terms, homelessness and destitution being the natural consequences of a world out of joint with divine order (Rose 2005, pp. 22-3; Sand 2009, pp.134-5). They had persevered, learning to keep their heads down and to move on when necessary, trying to preserve their Jewish way of life at whatever level they felt appropriate to maintaining a Jewish identity. For some families and individuals, however, the negation of that identity, through secularisation, assimilation, or even conversion, may have seemed to offer the only route to survival. Collectively, the Jews might be regarded as accustomed to the experience of loss, as “a people whose history is steeped in loss – of identity, of homeland, of ... respect ... for their beliefs” (Hirsch 2006, p.18)

The holocaust, as “the culmination of gentile anti-semitism” (Finkelstein 2003a, p.52), can be seen as a climax to this history of suffering, since it entailed loss of an absolute kind, loss of ontological security in its most basic terms. It dispossessed the Jews not only of their intrinsic status as human beings, but of any claims to existence, of any expectations of leading even the “barest” (Agamben 1998) of lives. Hitler had declared in the middle of the second world war that “the result of this war will be the complete annihilation of Jews” (Gilbert 1987, p.285). In the process of this annihilation, the Jews became less than human, in the words of one survivor “collectively stripped of every attribute and, nameless and non-descript ... tortured and killed – as ‘Jew X’” (Samuel Gringauz 1947, quoted in Shindler 2008, p.54). Transported

like animals, in railway wagons and the backs of lorries; “selected” on arrival at camps for either slave labour or immediate destruction on the basis of age, strength and ability to work; branded with numbers, like livestock, they had lost any perceived status as human beings, let alone citizens, any implicitly understood social right to be accorded dignity or treated with respect. “A strange brutalisation has taken place regarding the Jews. People ... often do not see in the Jew a human being but instead consider him as a kind of obnoxious animal that must be annihilated with every possible means, like rabid dogs, rats”, Zygmunt Klukowski, a Polish doctor, records in 1943 (quoted in Gilbert 1987, pp.502-3).

Loss of Trust

The Jews had long practised caution and circumspection to ensure survival in the various countries in which they had lived, their assumptions of any social contract with their host societies being necessarily limited. But the magnitude of this genocide, executed with all the efficiency and effectiveness of modern industrial techniques, and for the most part in the spirit of the extermination of loathed and despised vermin, must have surpassed even their canny expectations of the extent to which the social order on which they depended for existence could break down. “Throughout Europe the hitherto apparently natural conventions of human trust were undermined.” (Gilbert 1987, p.492)

Moreover, to the Jews of Europe, it must have seemed that they had been betrayed not only by their European societies, but by most of humanity. The United States and many other countries had put restrictions on Jewish immigration in the 1930s as the Nazi persecution was building up and more and more Jews, seeing the writing on the wall, tried to flee; Britain had restricted immigration to Palestine, trying to appease Arab reaction to the recent influx of Jews. Once the second world war started, international efforts were concentrated on the global conflict. As Novick (2000, pp.19-59) argues, with particular reference to America during the war years and in the immediate post-war period, what was happening to the Jews inside Europe

was not a particular focus of attention but “just one among countless dimensions of a conflict that was consuming the lives of tens of millions around the globe” (p.29). The war won, the Jewish element of the Nazi atrocities uncovered with the allied occupation of Germany was still regarded as one among many. But from the Jewish perspective, the pre-war blocks on emigration from Europe, the lack of any wartime rescue plan to get Jews out of Europe, and the prolonged post-war confinement of survivors in displaced persons camps around Europe, must have contributed to a feeling of abandonment, a sense of the Jewish fate as being an “eternal war for survival in a world that has always rejected the existence of Jews and will continually do so for all eternity” (Warschawski 2004b, p.43).

Nor could the reactions of those European Jews living in Palestine have done much to alleviate that sense. In the 1930s, transfer agreements between the Zionists and the German government had permitted many thousands of Jews to settle in Palestine, taking a proportion of their capital with them. This arrangement served the interests of both parties: the Nazis wanted Jews to leave Germany; the Zionists wanted more Jews, preferably with resources, in the Land of Israel (Segev 2000, pp.19-22). This move undoubtedly saved lives, but the motivation of the Yishuv was the building of its own society, and that remained its focus throughout the subsequent war years (Burg 2008, p.72; Sternhell 1998, pp.49-50). The Jews of Europe were significant to the extent that they could contribute to Zionist aims in Palestine, but “they were considered to have no value in themselves” (Sternhell 1998, p.50).

Loss of Self-Trust

There were also problems with trust nearer home as the circumstances of the European Jews deteriorated under the Nazi regime. Survivors of the camps and ghettos bore witness against many members of their communities who, as camp kapos or block supervisors, ghetto administrators or Jewish police, had done their Nazi masters’ bidding and inflicted various torments on their fellow Jews. In 1950, the two-year-old State of Israel passed a Nazis and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law, which was intended to bring any

collaborators now living in Israel to justice. None received harsher punishment than a few years' imprisonment, since the courts recognised the complexity of the situation being dealt with, but it was felt necessary to contribute to a clearing of the air among the survivor population (Zertal 2005, pp.60-79).

For the more elite members of the Jewish Councils, those senior figures who had organised, assembled and handed over sections of their communities to the transports, thereby co-operating both bureaucratically and politically with the Nazis, there seemed to be immunity from this law. But the Kastner case (Zertal 2005, pp.80-90), in which a senior Israeli figure was accused of wartime collaboration with the Nazis, and subsequently assassinated in a Tel Aviv street before he could be acquitted by the courts, demonstrated that a great deal of popular resentment was harboured against perceived collaborators at all levels. Although many of the Judenrat members may have faced impossible decisions, involving the sacrifice of some members of their communities in order to save others (Gilbert 1987, pp.483-4), the opinion was strongly voiced (Arendt 1977; Hilberg 1985) that less co-operation and more resistance from the Jewish leadership would have resulted in the destruction of fewer Jewish communities.

As well as harbouring perceptions of both their leadership and their fellow-Jews as having a hand in the annihilation of their people, many European Jews also questioned their own role in their downfall. Much has been made of general Jewish compliance and passivity in the face of their dispossession and subsequent destruction by the Nazi regime, going to the gas chambers "like lambs to the slaughter" (Sternhell 1998, p.329; Zertal 2005, p.138), and exhibiting "craven submission" (Neslen 2006, p.177) towards their oppressors. Bar a few recorded acts of resistance, defiance or rebellion, such as the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 (Gutman 1994; Zuckerman 1993), the overall response to the Nazi onslaught appears to have been one of fearful acquiescence.

In his account of mass murders of Jews near Chelmno in Poland, an eye-witness, put to work in a team digging, under the guns of a few guards,

graves that were soon to be inhabited by fellow Jews, voices a concern about his own conduct that was to be echoed many times over the post-holocaust years in relation to Jewish behaviour in general: "I actually cannot understand to this day why strong healthy men who had nothing to lose didn't do anything" (Gilbert 1987, p.276). He proffers the explanation that perhaps they wanted to save themselves in order to alert the Jewish population to their impending fate, a reasonable justification in retrospect, since that is what he himself did after managing to escape. Other testimony implies a wilful blindness, a widespread refusal to acknowledge the enormity of what was actually happening: "How is it possible that the Jews will be simply taken and shot?" (Gilbert 1987, p.194)

Certainly, the Jews were conditioned to accept rather than question, "to submit and endure rather than resist" (Ellis 1990, p.39). This strategy of restraint, coupled with a degree of ingenuity, had enabled their survival over centuries, and they may have believed, or deceived themselves into believing, that it would serve them in good stead now. Gilbert (1987 p.386) even suggests that the Nazi deception, particularly in the case of West European Jews, that they were being taken for resettlement or to labour camps, was designed to fit with this very propensity: "The Jewish will to survive and the German policy of deception were linked in what for the Jews was a tragic magnetism".

Finally, for many Jews, the experiences of the Nazi era served to cast doubt on the presumed Jewish relationship to God. Where was God in the shoah? How could their traditional God of history permit such atrocity and devastation? They had long endured suffering on the promise of redemption, but where was God's purpose in their extinction? There was a sense that the Jews had been abandoned by the historical God of their scriptures in the death camps: "Then and there God's comprehensibility ceased.... his omnipotence was put to a severe test, and his benevolence was doubted" (Burg 2008, pp.204-5). .

In summary, it might be argued that the holocaust was the last straw, the tipping point, in a long history of cruelties and injustices visited upon the Jews of Europe. There is, however, substantial evidence in the preceding pages that it was perceived as differing so significantly, in both nature and scale, from their previous experiences, that the European Jews were unable to place it within their schemes of prior knowledge. They could not believe they were facing wholesale dehumanised extermination in a situation which neither compliance nor ingenuity would necessarily get them out of, and from which no-one seemed willing to rescue them. There were, of course, the individual cases of Jews saved by “righteous Gentiles”, but these were the exception rather than the norm.

Given their history, the world-view of the European Jews was unlikely to be based on many positively optimistic expectations about their social situation or prospects, but the confrontation with mass dehumanisation and annihilation that the holocaust entailed must have seriously challenged any assumptions about life that they did entertain. The loss of the right to exist, of even the most fragile sense of security about being in the world; the loss of trust in the social or divine order which had served as a framework for their lives and a basis for their history so far; the loss of confidence in their own capacities and approach to life, could only have registered as traumatic (Fierke 2007, pp.123-43; Freyd 1996), serving to trigger grief amongst the remnant of European Jewry still left post-holocaust in what must have been, for them, a radically altered world.

The Emotional Reaction

The holocaust is a highly emotive subject in western consciousness, and, as such, has inspired a plethora of literature. Finkelstein (2003a, p.6) refers, with characteristic scepticism, to “the outpourings of anguish” to be found in “the shelves upon shelves of shlock (about the holocaust) that now line libraries and bookstores”. Neither the emotional connotations of the holocaust in the

western worldview, nor the emotional stances which inform the numerous accounts of it, are, however, relevant to the argument of this dissertation. Rather, as in the corresponding section of the previous chapter, the aim is to scan historical accounts of the post-holocaust period for what might be construed as indications of collective Jewish emotional atmosphere, and explore to what extent, if any, these fit with the pattern of emotional response typically associated with grief: namely, an initial period of disorientation followed by a turmoil of emotions surrounding a discernible oscillation over time between a backward-looking orientation focussed on the past, and a forward-looking concern with the future.

Silence and Shame

The initial reaction was silence: "It was thirty years before I could bring myself to talk about it" (Gilbert 1987, p. 442); "What happened to us was so terrible that we tried not to think about it" (Neslen 2006, p.181). A characteristic of the survivors' condition was "the inability to convey their experiences, to utter the unutterable" (Zertal 2005, p.55). The first decade and a half after the liberation of Nazi Europe "were marked, in Israel and in other countries such as France and the US, by public silence and some sort of statist denial regarding the holocaust an almost concerted effort to disremember the recent, unbearable past" (Zertal 2005, pp.92-3).

Novick (2000), recognising this phenomenon, observes that in the United States the holocaust seemed to make little impression on American Jewry in terms of public interest or discussion (pp.105-8), and that those survivors who wanted to speak found few interested or willing listeners for accounts of their experiences (p.83). Finkelstein (2003a, p.6) supports this from personal experience "I do not remember the Nazi holocaust ever intruding on my childhood. The main reason was that no-one outside my family seemed to care about what had happened.....This was not a respectful silence. It was simply indifference". There was a general need to move on after the second world war, and get on with living. Moreover, when the camps had been liberated in 1945, there was nothing in the media reporting to suggest that

the Jews were any more than one group among many Nazi victims (Kushner 2008; Novick 2000, pp.64-5).

Meanwhile, in Israel, it seemed to be more a case of obligation not to talk about the holocaust, for to do so was to admit to being a weak, shameful survivor, a “savonette” (an allusion to the Nazis making soap from the fat of Jews at Auschwitz and Treblinka) (Warschawski 2004a, pp.154-5). “Nobody..... was talking about what happened to us in those days. It was a complete taboo until we were in our 50s and 60s” (Neslen 2006, p.180). The Jews of Israel were busy building their state, a preoccupation which might be interpreted in terms of problem-focussed coping (Stroebe and Schut 1999) with the post-holocaust situation, putting off any need for confrontation with its emotional reverberations.

The silence which characterised the initial emotional response thus seems to have been motivated from two directions: from within the traumatised individuals themselves, whose numbness, shock and general disorientation as a result of their experiences, could find no adequate expression; and from society at large, which disenfranchised their grief for a variety of reasons, including indifference, the urgency of pressing practical concerns, lack of recognition of the loss that had been suffered, and shame.

The early Zionist movement in Palestine at the beginning of the twentieth century had sought to create a new Jew, to reform the image of the exilic Jew, abject, weak and suffering, outcast from and persecuted by European society, and replace it with that of a strong, proud, independent worker on the land. “The disgust and shame the pioneers felt about their people sunk in poverty, exposed to the blows of gentiles, or held captive by alien cultures are boundless” (Sternhell 1998, p.36). A negative perception of Jewish exile had turned to a negative perception of Jews who lived in exile as submissive, timid and lacking in self-confidence (Zerubavel 1995, p.19). The Zionist contempt for and distancing from the European Jewish reaction to oppression grew stronger with the events of the Nazi regime, as these statements of Ben Gurion indicate “We are choking with shame about what is happening in Germany, in Poland, and in America, that Jews are not daring

to fight back. We do not belong to that Jewish people.....We do not want to be such Jews” (quoted in Rose 2005, p.108).

The post-war Jewish community in the United States also distanced itself from the victim status of the holocaust. Novick (2000, pp.116-23) points out how Jewish organisations often lobbied to ensure that the Nazi atrocities were not represented in the media or in political speeches with too narrow a focus on the Jewish element of the suffering. While recognising that this effort to broaden out the categories of sufferers involved in the holocaust was only natural in an era where victim status largely evoked contempt, and did not enjoy the popular sympathy it elicits today, Novick also suggests that this was a strategic move to normalise the image of the Jew so as to facilitate easier integration into American society.

Certainly, at a point in the twentieth century when John Wayne was a major role-model, when heroism and strength were qualities to be admired, and courageous action seen as the only way to deal with threat, the traditional image of the victim Jew did not cut an impressive figure. It might reasonably be conjectured that the Jews, on a collective level, were ashamed of what had happened to them, felt a measure of guilt and self-contempt for what they had brought upon themselves and allowed themselves to become.

Victors or Victims?

For most Jews, both within and outside the state of Israel, the initial silence was only broken in the sixties, as a result of two major events: the Eichmann trial of 1961 and the Six Days' War of 1967. Adolf Eichmann had been a key Nazi figure involved in managing the logistics of the final solution, the transportation and extermination of millions of Europe's Jews. Escaping from Germany at the end of the war, he found refuge in Argentina. Israeli Mossad operatives tracked him down and in 1960 abducted him to face trial for his crimes in Israel, where, in 1962, he was hanged (Gilbert 2008, pp.336-7). Burg (2008, p.128) describes the effects of this trial in Israel as “like the cork capping a fermented drink in a bottle. Almost thirty years of upheaval turned

into an endless flow of talk that wished to express all: pain and trauma, rage and frustration, vengefulness and feelings of guilteverything that was buried with great emotional toil during the years from ... 1933 to.....1960 resurfaced”. As Zertal (2005, p.95) observes, the Israeli capture and trial of Eichmann provided the first opportunity for Jews to look at the holocaust from a position of power and control, not of helplessness and submission, surrounding it with a completely new discourse of strength and retributive action.

A few years later, in the Six Days’ War of 1967, Israel won a victory which was perceived as having prevented a second holocaust, since the general conviction on the eve of the war, amidst rising tension and anxiety bordering on hysteria, was that the Arabs represented a Nazi-like enemy at the gates of Israel, intent on the extermination and annihilation of the Jews within (Zertal 2005, pp.118-21). In addition, the military acquisition of the territories of the West Bank, Gaza, Jerusalem, the Sinai and the Golan Heights, put Israel in control of the ancient lands of Judea and Samaria, the core kingdoms of David and Solomon central to Judaic history, and of holy sites such as the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem that were at the heart of Jewish scripture. This endowed the victory with a redemptive, messianic quality, and, as well as reinforcing the sense of a new power and control in worldly affairs, persuaded many Jews that their god had not abandoned them, but had strengthened their hand in this conflict in order to return them fully to the land from which they had been exiled two thousand years before (Ellis 1990, pp.9-15; Kimmerling 2001, pp.45-6, 109, 216; Novick 2000, pp.149-51; Shindler 2008, pp.123-5; Zertal 2005, pp.113-26). The Six Days’ War redeemed the holocaust: the victim had morphed into the victorious and righteous warrior.

But if Israel had succeeded in restoring Jewish pride, it was not so successful in dealing with the other major emotion dominating post-holocaust Jewry, fear. Prior to the Six Days’ War, as mentioned above, the heightened anxiety both in Israel and amongst American Jews, for whom “Israel was poised on the brink of destruction” (Novick 2000, p.148), was evident from, and doubtless intensified by, the recourse to Nazi and holocaust comparisons in describing the imminent confrontation. In reality, the Israeli military was vastly

superior to the Arab armies in terms of training and equipment. Moreover, Arab talk of driving the Jews into the sea could be reasonably regarded as rhetorical exaggeration, reflecting a cultural propensity to put emotion before logic and use words for primarily affective effect (Nydell 2006, pp.27-32). But all the Jews could focus on, as a result of previous experience, was their own vulnerability, and Burg (2008, pp.56-7) points out how, to this day, politicians and media commentators revert to Nazi associations when describing the situation of Israel vis-a-vis Palestinian suicide bombings and cross-border rocket attacks, emphasising Israeli susceptibility to attack and abuse.

The official Israeli position throughout its history as a sovereign state has consistently been one of self-defence, the need to protect itself and prevent the sort of vulnerability that the Jews exhibited in Europe and that resulted in the holocaust. This fear of vulnerability and consequent preoccupation with security required the construction of a strong state both internally and externally, leading to the creation of "fortress Israel" (Burg 2008, p.203; Halper 2008, p.63; Warschawski 2004b, pp.47-8). Comprising a population of émigrés from diverse backgrounds and parts of the world, entering the country at different points in time, Israel had to unify these disparate elements in a melting-pot which would dissolve their old identities and create a new Israeli one, thus rendering their variety less precarious in terms of building a strong society (Neslen 2006, ps.11-35). One of the unifying totems of this society was, and remains, the military, with the military service which is compulsory for almost all Jewish Israelis providing a pathway to future employment possibilities and acting as the basis of full citizenship (Burg 2008, p.54; Kimmerling 2001, pp.6, 101, 220; Shafir and Peled 2002, pp. 126, 290, 346).

As if a militarised society was not enough to assuage fear and ensure security, Israel has also built a "security fence" around itself as protection against Palestinian incursion and "terrorist attack" (Shindler 2008, pp.326-32; Warschawski 2004b, pp.49-53). For a people who feel the whole world is against them (Burg 2008, p.14; Gilbert 2008, p.552), a society almost paranoid in its fears, vulnerability is to be prevented at all costs, and security, in terms of self-protection, has become the predominant strategy as regards

external relations. Hence peace with the Palestinians has been interpreted by the Israelis in terms of their own security throughout the various peace processes and road-maps to peace, (Kimmerling 2001, pp.223-6; Warschawski 2004b, p.72) and military strength, along with military-style fortifications, regarded as the primary means of achieving peace and security (Kimmerling 2001, pp.208-28).

But the victor-victim ambiguity persists even within the military. Lerner (1988, cited in Ellis 1990, p.82), defining anger in terms of fear, as an over-reaction to lack of confidence, suggests that the brutality that has come to be associated with some of the actions of the Israeli military is “a rage that ... may be understood, in part, as a response to the two thousand years during which the world systematically denied their right to exist as a people, a denial that culminated with extermination in gas chambers and crematoria”. And there is also the victor-as-victim, “purity-of-arms” syndrome, whereby the ostensibly reluctant warrior expresses regret and anguish about the actions he has to perform in order to carry out his military duty. Recent Israeli films like “Waltz with Bashir” and “Lebanon”, illustrate this phenomenon, with former soldiers reliving their experiences of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, their Lebanese victims seen only through the lens of their memories and tormented consciences. Finkelstein (2003b, pp.110-20), with characteristic cynicism, draws direct parallels with the Nazis entertaining moral conflicts about carrying out the final solution in the interests of their country. But a more sympathetic view of this syndrome might see it as an attempt to deny the lack of confidence that masks itself in anger, to distance from the fear that gives rise to brutality. It might also be regarded as providing a way of retrospectively rationalising actions and behaviour at odds with Jewish precepts for moral conduct.

Security

While the Israeli state sought security through the creation of a strongly unified and militaristic society, the religious sphere made a considerable contribution to the building of “fortress Israel” in a moral sense, given that the

essence of Judaism is the equation of faith with security, trust in God being a remedy for all worldly fears and anxieties. The religious conviction that the Jews are in Israel by pre-ordained divine plan, and that the creation of the state of Israel signifies the end of exile and the return of the tribes of Israel to their promised land, provides significant justification for the realisation and defence of the whole Zionist project. Thus the orthodox and ultra-orthodox have increasingly flourished in Israeli society, granted dispensation from normal military service while they study in yeshivas (academies for study of the scriptures), providing a different, if less material, source of strength to the nation (Shafir and Peled 2002, pp.143-5).

Meanwhile, those Jews who settled in the United States, moved by the equally compelling urges to assimilate into American society and to maintain a distinct Jewish identity, also appear to have sought ways to counter deeply held fears concerning their perceived vulnerability. The waves of Jewish immigration to the United States between the early twentieth century and the end of the second world war created a population of American Jews from a generation of Jewish immigrants. By the end of the war, that population was the largest and most significant Jewish community in the world. And, given the success in commerce, industry, science, the media, the arts and politics, of so many American Jews, it was also a very powerful community, wealthy, influential and resourceful. Nevertheless, it seemed haunted by “the spectre of violence and persecution that hung over the heads of their brothers and sisters elsewhere” (Diner 2004, p.6), and set about founding, and strengthening already existing, organisations aimed at the defence and security of the Jewish community. These public relations and advocacy bodies included the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the American Jewish Committee, The American Jewish Congress and the Anti-Defamation League. As time went on, and American Jewry developed ever closer ties with the newly independent and rapidly enlarging Jewish state, similar organisations were established to support the relationship between Israel and the United States through the lobbying and advising of Congress on Israel-related issues. Amongst the most influential and better known of these are

the American Israel Public Affairs Committee and the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs.

Such single-minded preoccupation with security, both within Israel and in the American Jewish community, implies a degree of self-absorption which is characteristic of the grief experience and which serves to isolate and disengage the griever from his social world (Carlson and Miller 1987). Such behaviour traits were not new: Sand (2009, p.50) remarks, in the context of Jewish history, on the “communal isolation that eventually became (the Jewish communities’) distinguishing mark”; and Lozowick (1997, p.115) underlines the predisposition to self-absorption when he observes that, post-holocaust, the question for the Germans was how such things could have happened, but for the Jews it was how such things could have happened to them.

The phenomena of “fortress Israel” in the Middle East and the “fortress-like mentality” of Jews in America (Novick 2000, p.180) are arguably representative of old fear in new contexts. Indeed, all of the dominant collective emotions evidenced in the decades following the holocaust are essentially no different from the emotions displayed by Jewish communities throughout their long history of loss and suffering in Europe: shame, humiliation, fear, anxiety, mistrust, suspicion, only writ large and on a grander, more global scale. Israel itself might be regarded as “a colossal sublimation of historical pain” (Rose 2005, p.130), the dynamic of the European Jewish grief experience diverted to a constant drive for security based on the never-ending fear of vulnerability, of susceptibility to further loss and suffering.

In grief theory terms, this situation suggests “complicated”, variously termed “traumatic” or “prolonged”, grief, in which the griever, unable to move forward and trapped in endless unproductive and maladaptive behaviour patterns, extends his grief experience beyond what might be considered a reasonable length of time necessary to bring it to a practical conclusion (Boelen and Prigerson 2007; Corr, Nabe and Corr 2003, pp.245-7; Prigerson and Jacobs 2001; Rando 1993; Worden 2009, pp.127-52; Zisook and Shear 2009).

Volkan's notion of "perennial mourning" (2009) comes to mind, with his explanation of how both individuals and societies can be stuck in their grief for years and generations respectively, indefinitely postponing their adaptation to the post-loss world by externalising the hurt which loss has inflicted on them. He depicts this condition as "frozen" and "lifeless", a description which chimes with Burg's observation (2008, p.33) that, as a result of feelings of fear and mistrust, Israel has developed muscles, but not soul. Many, however, would regard such muscular development as a necessary and natural response to what they perceive as the existential threats Israel faces from Iran, the Palestinians, Hizbollah, and increasing levels of anti-Israeli sentiment in Europe and elsewhere.

Making Sense of the Loss

Post-holocaust, after the events which brought centuries of European Jewish suffering to a climax, came the need for those Jews who were left, having escaped annihilation by the Nazi regime and now either in displaced persons' camps in Europe or living in the various countries they had fled to prior to the final solution, to adapt to the new situation, to a world in which Jews had undergone large-scale dehumanisation and extermination. In order to survive as Jews, and to repair their abruptly discontinued European history, they had to make some sense of their post-loss situation and find ways of incorporating it into a coherent ongoing collective narrative. This meaning-making was carried out largely with reference to the State of Israel, utilised as both a symbol of and site for the redefinition of collective identity.

Building a Strong Nation

As mentioned above, Jews had been settling in Palestine for many years, initially with religious motivation, and then, from the turn of the nineteenth century, as refugees from anti-semitism in Eastern Europe. Political Zionism,

aimed at preserving the Jewish collective consciousness from dissipation through either assimilation or persecution, encouraged this immigration. Land was acquired, a social infrastructure established, and, by the end of the second world war, the yishuv presented all the features of a state-within-a-state in British-mandated Palestine. These developments were not unanimously welcomed by all Jews, however. The orthodox religious regarded Zionism as heresy, since the scriptures ordained that the Jews would return to their holy land only after the coming of the Messiah, and going there before was seen as an ill-advised and futile attempt to force God's hand, a tempting of providence (Kimmerling 2005, pp.187-8; Neslen 2006, pp.5-6, 94; Rose 2005, pp.31-3). For many secular Jews, the United States and, to a lesser extent, parts of the world such as South Africa or Latin America, offered more enticing prospects for living in peace and prosperity than the perceived hardships involved in settling a mosquito-infested piece of land in a backward Arab region constantly caught up in battles between the great powers (Dershowitz 2003, p.14; Gelvin 2005, p.66; Kimmerling 2001, p.91; Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, pp.22-3; Said,1992, pp.79-81).

But the holocaust served to sharpen perceptions. "Never again!" could only be a meaningful vow of determination to survive if the Jews were in a position to enforce it, and not living as dependent minorities in other peoples' countries. The idea of an independent, sovereign Jewish state, a safe haven for all Jews, took on a new appeal. The yishuv was in the right place at the right time: world sympathy for the Jewish post-war predicament was high; the United States pressured Britain into allowing increased Jewish immigration to Palestine; and the British realised they were too preoccupied elsewhere in their empire to persevere with their troublesome Palestinian mandate (Shindler 2008, pp.38-43, 54-61; Smith 2007, pp.187-93). Following the brief War of Independence, the State of Israel was declared on May 14th 1948 (Gelvin 2005, pp.126-34; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.91-5; Shindler 2008, pp.43-9; Smith 2007 pp.199-204). The Jews had secured themselves a place in the world and were accepted into the international order. Levels of immigration rose as the "ingathering of exiles" (Gilbert 2008, pp.250-78; Shindler 2008, pp.62-5) began, aimed at restoring the Jews, the tribes of

Israel of antiquity, to what was perceived as their divinely and historically rightful land. Orthodox believers could still not accept the hubris involved in jumping God's gun, but for many other Jews, less strict in their interpretation of the scriptures, Israel provided a way forward out of the post-holocaust predicament, an opportunity to assert the Jewish right to exist.

From the earliest days of the yishuv in Palestine, assertiveness and determination were features of this new Jewish community. The regenerated, muscular Jew of Eretz Israel, the tough "sabra" (see p.106 above), was in masculine counterpoint to the submissive, timid Jew of Europe (Kimmerling 2001, pp.91, 230; Shindler 2008, p.91; Zertal 2005, p.170; Zerubavel 1995, pp.26-7). Strong, hardy pioneers, the early settlers worked the land to feed their families, and stood ready to defend that land and their kin (Kimmerling 2001, pp.98, 101, 208-11; Zerubavel 1995, pp.148-60).

Such heroism was illustrated by the popular myth of the 1920 Battle of Tel Hai, and its hero, Yosef Trumpeldor, the leader of a small group of Zionist settlers in the Galilee who died in defence of their settlement. Trumpeldor was reported as, though severely wounded, having urged his comrades to fight on and uttering the words "It is worth dying for one's country" in his last minutes (Kimmerling 2001, pp.31-2; Zerubavel 1995, pp.39-47). National myths like this were evolving. A national history was being established, based largely on the bible, but also covering recent yishuv events like Tel Hai, drawing a direct line from antiquity to the twentieth century, with the whole period of exile in between missed out (Kimmerling 2001, pp.17-18; Sternhell 1998, pp.49-50; Warschawski 2004a, p.210; Zerubavel 1995, pp.13-36). Moreover, well-known historical defeats, such as the fall of Masada in AD73, when the Jewish rebels chose suicide over enslavement by the Romans (Kimmerling 2001, p.18; Zerubavel 1995, pp.60-76); or the Bar Kokhba Revolt of AD132-5, named after the leader of Judea's final and ultimately unsuccessful rebellion against the Roman Empire (Kimmerling 2001, p.19; Zerubavel 1995, pp.48-59), were now presented in terms of heroism and defiance. The new Hebrew, the Israeli, was a person of strength and courage, with a national history of heroic acts behind him, unlike the old

Jew of Europe, whose weakness and cowardice were evident from his long history of persecution and suffering.

The Zionist version of Israel's historical origins as aligned with biblical scripture was supported by archaeological evidence, a flurry of exploration and publication in pre-state and early state days all serving to back up the dominant historiographic discourse. Although by the late sixties doubts were beginning to be cast on these archaeological findings, generations had already absorbed them as part of Israeli collective memory, central myths about the origin of their nation and their ancient rights to the land. (Abu-ElHaj 2001; Sand 2009, pp.107-220; Whitelam 1996)

The new discourse surrounding the resumption of the Judaic collective narrative in Israel and the rediscovered heroic Jewish image, warranted a new language as its medium, and Hebrew was revived in the yishuv for the purposes of everyday communication, having been reserved for religious purposes only in exile (Zerubavel 1995, pp.29-31). It provided a link with the past of antiquity, being the language of the ancient Israelites, and also served as a unifying factor for immigrants to the new society, as well as another feature distinguishing them from the exilic multi-lingual or Yiddish-speaking European Jews (Kimmerling 2001, p.93).

Israel, in both pre-state prospect and fully recognised statehood, represented an opportunity for European Jewry to move on from loss and occupy a legitimate place in the world within a proper nation, complete with territory, history, myths and language. Moreover, this was a nation founded on strength and courage: the strength to work and wield the plough, and the courage to defend and brandish the gun, both qualities essential for warding off any potential future threats. The State of Israel, its creation consequent on both the aims of political Zionism and on the exigencies and opportunities of the global situation in the aftermath of the second world war and the holocaust, can be seen as a response to existential loss and dispossession: a strategy for coping with the fear and shame surrounding that loss, and a means of countering the risk of vulnerability to any similar future loss.

The Cracks Start Showing

The catharsis of the Eichmann trial and the victory of the Six Days' War served as proof that Israel was successfully fulfilling the above functions. As a viable and victorious state, confident in its ability to defend itself, and bolstered by a new legitimacy in religious terms derived from the somewhat unexpected possession of the entire territory of the land of ancient Israel, the young Jewish nation increasingly attracted the interests of Jews in the United States. There was a new closeness, a new enthusiasm for and commitment to the Israeli cause, together with an admiration for the heroic and brilliant military abilities that had been demonstrated (Novick 2000, pp.148-9). For many American Jews, the fear preceding the 1967 war, along with the sense of triumph at the Israeli victory, created a sense of solidarity, established a collective identity they could share with their fellow-Jews in Israel (Christison 2001, p.119). At the same time, Israel enjoyed popular support and sympathy amongst the general American public, and United States policy-makers seemed increasingly inclined to see the Middle East through Israeli eyes (Christison 2001, pp.119-23), while deeming Israel itself worthy of support as a bulwark of western values in a region where Cold War interests were being played out (Berry and Philo 2006, p.43; Gelvin 2005, pp.228-30).

But the confidence inspired by these developments was short-lived, soon shaken by the Yom Kippur War of 1973. The initial Egyptian success, the fact that the Israelis seemed to be almost taken by surprise, or, at the very least, unprepared for attack, and the high number of Israeli casualties, all served as reminders of Israel's vulnerability (Berry and Philo 2006, pp.60-7; Shindler 2008, pp.144-5). As in 1967, Israel won the war, but the victory this time was perceived as defeat (Burg 2009, p.119; Gilbert 2008, pp.460-1; Harms and Ferry 2005, p.126; Kimmerling 2001, p.47; Novick 2000, pp.151-3). The Arabs had asserted themselves; Israel was increasingly isolated in the global community, and becoming ever more dependent on the support of the United States.

The experience of 1973 resulted in two different orientations for Israel (Kimmerling 2001, pp.47, 216). One was based on the need for compromise,

manifesting in the Camp David Accords of the 1970s which aimed at normalising relations between Israel and Egypt; the return to Egypt of the Sinai territory occupied in 1967; the historic visit of Egypt's President Sadat to the Jerusalem Knesset in 1977; and the signing in 1979 of a treaty between Israel and Egypt, bringing thirty years of conflict to an end (Gilbert 2008, pp.462-95; Smith 2007, pp.360-5). "Land-for-peace" was the basic formula, the Israelis demanding recognition and peace for the return of territory they had won in 1967 (Gelvin 2005, pp.174-7, 179-80; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.112-3). The other orientation was based on the need to maintain maximum military and political strength and retain as much land as possible in order to ensure Israel's survival. Military capacity was demonstrated in exploits like the daring Entebbe raid of 1976, where Israeli commandos stormed an aircraft hi-jacked to Uganda by Arab terrorists, saving the Jewish hostages on board and striking a victory against such forms of protest (Gilbert 2008, pp.471-3). Equal, if less spectacular, determination to protect Israeli interests was shown by groups like Gush Emunim (the bloc of the faithful) in their establishment of settlements in the occupied West Bank (Berry and Philo 2006, p. 73; Gelvin 2005, pp.189-94; Gilbert 2008, pp.469-70; Shindler 2008, p.143; Smith 2007, pp.326-8).

For years, Israel seemed torn between these orientations of might and compromise: the need to prevent vulnerability through a show of strength and force, and the need to engage in more open and accommodating interaction with Arab neighbours in order to establish normalised relations. In grief terms, this suggests the oscillation between preoccupation with the past, specifically the vulnerability of the pre-holocaust Jewish world, and a more forward-looking concern based on an appreciation of the present, in this case the normalisation of the post-holocaust sovereign State of Israel. Many, however, would see in the concern with strength and vulnerability not so much an indicator of clinging to the past as a level-headed response to the ongoing existential threats faced by Israel.

With the invasion of Lebanon in 1982 (Berry and Philo 2006, pp.74-82; Gelvin 2005, pp.241-2; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.131-9; Shindler 2008, pp.172-81; Smith 2007, pp.379-81), and the lead-up to and handling of the

Palestinian intifada of 1987 (Berry and Philo 2006, pp.82-9; Gelvin 2005, pp.212-21; Shindler 2008, pp.203-7; Smith 2007, pp.412-24), the show of strength and force was the dominant orientation, and both events created dissension within Israel as well as drawing criticism from outside. With Rabin and the Oslo Accords of the early nineties (Berry and Philo 2006, pp.89-100; Gelvin 2005, pp.228-37; Shindler 2008, pp.227-36; Smith 2007, pp.450-64), compromise appeared to weigh more heavily in the balance. For, although settlement building in the Palestinian territories continued apace during this period, and, arguably, the most significant Israeli concession might be considered their recognition of the Palestinians as a political community for the first time, it did seem that attempts were being made to come to some form of accommodation with the Palestinians and Israel's Arab neighbours.

Rabin viewed this peace-making as the way forward from the Jewish past "No longer are we necessarily a people that dwells alone, and no longer is it true that the whole world is against us. We must overcome the sense of isolation that has held us in thrall for almost half a century" (quoted in Gilbert 2008, p.552, and Shindler 2008, p.227). But not every Israeli lived in Rabin's world, and in 1994 he was assassinated by one of the many who saw his stance of compromise with the Arabs as betraying Israel's interests and inviting vulnerability (Gilbert 2008, pp.587-8; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.156-8; Novick 2000, pp.163-5; Shindler 2008, pp. 244-66; Smith 2007, pp.466-8). In the protests leading up to his assassination, he was commonly pictured on protestors' banners and placards wearing an SS uniform (Gilbert 2008, p.556; Shindler 2008, p.261; Smith 2007, p.466).

A Diverse Society

Such deep divisions within Israeli society regarding the way forward are hardly surprising given its diversity. The original waves of immigration at the turn of the nineteenth century were pioneering, East European, Ashkenazi Jews. As the twentieth century advanced and the Nazi regime extended its sphere of influence, increasing numbers of Jews from both Central and East Europe arrived in Palestine. By 1945 most western countries had restricted

Jewish immigration, so when Europe was liberated, many displaced European Jews, encouraged by the Zionists, sought illegal entry to Palestine, despite British reluctance to let them in (Gilbert 2008, pp.124-30; Shindler 2008, pp.54-61).

With the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948, a legitimate and formal “ingathering of the exiles” (Gilbert 2008, pp.250-78; Shindler 2008, pp.62-5) began, doubling the population within the following three years. Over a quarter of a million more East European Jews arrived, more than half “bought” from their communist regimes, largely with funds raised by American Jews. Well over another quarter of a million Jews came from a variety of Middle Eastern and North African states, the defeat of the Arab armies in the conflict with Israel having rendered many of their situations untenable, stirring up antagonism towards them even in communities where they had lived in relative peace and prosperity for centuries. It has also been suggested (Gelvin 2005, p.168; Giladi 1998; Gilbert 2008, pp.257-8) that in some of these communities Israeli agents conducted campaigns of intimidation to persuade the Jews to leave for Israel.

The practical challenges, in terms of housing, food, employment and education, involved in absorbing such a vast intake of people from a variety of backgrounds, mostly arriving with nothing, to a newly sovereign state which had just fought a couple of major wars, were met and overcome with the help of generous funding, again mainly from American Jews. But welding this kaleidoscope of humanity into a unified society was infinitely more difficult, given the range of background cultures, the disparity in resources, and the inbuilt sense of superiority displayed by the Ashkenazi founders of the state (Gilbert 2008, p.287; Kimmerling 2001, pp.71-2; Neslen 2006, pp.11-12; Shafir and Peled 2002, pp.74-87). Moreover, within a decade, the Mizrahim, the oriental and maghrebin Jews, accounted for 50% of the Jewish component of Israeli society (Kimmerling 2001, p.94; Shafir and Peled 2002, p.89). The destruction of European Jewry had considerably altered Jewish demographics, so that a state based on European concepts, and established largely by European Jews, now began to rely on non-European Jews for the bulk of its population. And this population needed to maintain quantity if it

was to remain a majority in a Jewish state which also included Muslim and Christian Arab elements, those Palestinians who had remained within Israel's borders at independence.

During subsequent decades, immigration proceeded apace, albeit in lesser volume and at a less dramatic rate. There were increased numbers from both South and North America in the sixties and seventies; the eighties saw the dramatic airlift of several thousand Ethiopian Jews, the Falasha, from refugee camps in the Sudan, following their flight from discrimination and oppression under Ethiopia's Mengistu regime (Kimmerling 2001, pp.149-63; Shafir and Peled 2002, pp.320-3); and the demise of the Soviet Union at the end of the eighties resulted in a massive influx of over three quarters of a million Russian immigrants during the nineties, almost half of whom were reckoned to be non-Jewish (Kimmerling 2001, pp.136-49; Shafir and Peled 2002, pp.309-20).

Kimmerling identifies seven major cultures within contemporary Israeli society (2001, p.2): the secular Ashkenazi upper middle class; the national religious, accommodating religion with Zionism; the traditionalist mizrahim, the oriental Jews from the Middle East and North Africa; the orthodox religious; the Arabs; the Russians and the Ethiopians. None of these groups can be considered completely homogeneous, but each exhibits a distinctive collective identity, and they all compete along different parameters of religion, class, political affiliation and ethnicity, for social and political influence, and for claims on the definition of Israeliness. Shafir and Peled (2002, pp.323-34) add to this list of sub-cultures the recent influx of overseas labour migrants from Africa, Asia, South America and Eastern Europe, though recognising that this group, while resident in Israel, cannot as yet make any claims on the basis of being of Israel.

As originally conceived, Israel was a Jewish nation, a homeland for Jews which would also function as a hub and potential refuge for the Jewish diaspora. What has actually developed is a diverse Israeli state, with a constant tension between its various and radically divergent cultural sub-groups. The state has employed a number of mechanisms to give some unity

to the varied ingredients in the Israeli melting-pot: the universality of Hebrew as the national language; the education system and its diffusion of a common version of Israeli myth and history; the military service incumbent on all bar Arab (excepting the Druze) Israelis, orthodox women and yeshiva students; the discourse of self-defence, which necessitates this militarisation, against the common Arab enemy; and the promotion and encouragement of respect for and devotion to the Jewish religion and the Israeli state. These have all served as totems of Israeli identity and ways of integrating newcomers to the collective.

Increasingly, the holocaust has also become one of these totems, despite the fact that, as a historic event, it only has direct relevance to European Ashkenazi Jews, and that, as an icon for loss, it excludes the different but equally valid losses involved in becoming an Israeli citizen for the other groups referred to above (Neslen 2006, p.12). The central importance of Yad Vashem, the holocaust memorial, and a traditional first stop for all official visitors to Israel (Burg 2008, p.22; Gilbert 2008, pp.288-9); the significance of Holocaust Memorial Day in the official Israeli calendar, along with religious festivals and commemorations of heroic deeds and the achievement of independence (Gilbert 2008, p.520); the growing popularity of official school trips to the sites of extermination camps in Poland for the inter-generational transmission of holocaust memory on an emotional level through enabling students, according to Ministry of Education guidelines, "to feel and try to comprehend the loss... the moral depravity... the links to their community past" (quoted in Feldman 2008, p.59), are all indicators of the focus put on the holocaust by the state.

The loss suffered by European Jewry appears to have been kept at the centre of Israeli collective consciousness as a reminder of what happens to Jews when they allow themselves to become vulnerable. Burg (2008) argues that it is time for Israel to "forget the holocaust and rise from its ashes", to wake up to "normalcy, the new beginning after what happened to us in the middle of the last century" (p.232). He claims that preoccupation with the holocaust has created a belligerent, xenophobic, backward-looking society, "It is time to leave Auschwitz behind and build a healthy Israel" (p.210).

Warschawski (2004b) also perceives Israel as “sick, terribly sick” (p.95), with violence, brutality and lack of civility at every level of a deteriorating, paranoid society that he sees as on a suicide course unless it confronts its own isolationism and militarisation.

Collective meaning-making in a post-holocaust world has focussed on strength, defined, on the basis of a deep-set fear which has been externalised onto the surrounding world, as absence of vulnerability rather than as confidence in any innate ability to cope with whatever eventualities openness might entail. The need for normalisation, accommodation and compromise has been recognised, paid much lip-service, and passionately advocated by many individual Israelis, together with Jews in the wider diaspora. But, as a nation, Israel seems stuck in patterns of behaviour that preclude progress in that direction. This could be regarded as a reasonable response to the lessons of experience. Or it could be interpreted as maladaptive, complicated grieving, a failure to relinquish the old assumptive world and move on (Rando 1993).

Context and Consequences

“The world let Jews be murdered for millennia, culminating in history’s greatest genocide. From remorse, it created Israel, but soon hardened its heart against this hapless people, cutting it little slack in its effort to survive”. (Konner 2006, p.237) Israel is “the ‘Jew’ among the states of the world”, subject to international hypocrisy in a continuation of “the world’s long and disturbing history of judging the Jewish people by different, and far more demanding, standards”(Dershowitz 2003, p.11). Such perceptions of the context in which the Jews have had to operate are not atypical. They chime with the isolationism that has come to distinguish Jewish communities, with the “world is against us” syndrome that resulted in European Jews keeping their heads down in a position of compliance, and Israeli Jews – “jews with teeth” (Konner 2006) – arming themselves to the teeth and adopting a

belligerent pose of “active self-defence” (Warschawski 2004b, pp.21-3). They represent an outlook which is understandable when seen from that particular Jewish angle, but other perspectives as detailed below permit a different and infinitely more complex picture of the ways in which context has influenced Jewish, and more recently Israeli, post-holocaust history.

The European Background to Zionism

When Zionism was born in nineteenth century Europe, as a solution to the persecution and assimilation arising from anti-semitism, it was created within a framework of the dominant intellectual and cultural paradigms of the time. The eighteenth century enlightenment, followed by the French Revolution, had unleashed the forces of liberal democracy in Europe, along with the idea of the nation-state as a consensual contract between state and citizen, a political and legal foundation for individual liberation and self-realisation. Avineri (1981, pp.3-13) argues that many Jews who went to Palestine at the turn of the nineteenth century were not simply fleeing persecution (this motivation could have taken them more easily to the United States), but were actually responding to this influence and seeking in Palestine an ideal of self-determination which post-1789 Europe had failed to provide for them.

The surge of nationalism in nineteenth century Europe, evolving out of an era of empires, led to a liberal democratic model of nationhood in Western Europe, but to a more organic, ethnically-based, blood-and-soil model in Central and Eastern Europe (Sternhell 1998, pp.10-11). Nations here were seen as necessarily homogeneous in culture, language, religion and ethnicity, sprung from and linked to the land. Citizens owed allegiance to a common state as a result of common descent, and the individual citizen had little standing in his own right. Jews in Eastern Europe therefore were “faced with the collective difficulty of finding a place in emerging national cultures” (Ellis 1990, p.43).

Meanwhile, socialism was developing from its initial stirrings in the late eighteenth century as a reaction to the adverse social effects of capitalism.

By the late nineteenth century, Engels and Marx had outlined their influential theories, and various offshoots of and counter-movements to Marxism gave rise to a wide spectrum of socialist belief, from communism to social democracy. Sternhell (1998, pp.7-11) identifies nationalist socialism (so called to differentiate it from the negative associations of national socialism and Nazism), a product of anti-Marxist socialism and ethnic nationalism, as having the greatest influence on early Zionism. Viewing the nation as primary and socialism as a nation-building tool, "this form of socialism preached the organic unity of the nation and the mobilisation of all classes of society for the achievement of national objectives" (Sternhell 1998, p.7). These principles characterised the pre-state yishuv and the early years of the State of Israel.

Another dominant feature of nineteenth century Europe was expansionist colonialism. European pioneers advanced and settled throughout the North American continent, Victorian Britain sat astride much of the world as a result of her history of imperial conquests and colonisation, and many other European countries were in long-established possession of colonial territories in various parts of Asia and Africa. Whether motivated by exploitative material greed, or by a "mission civilisatrice", or a mixture of both, the colonising Europeans presumed a natural right to use other lands for their own advancement and to attempt to re-form them in the European image. Their assumptions of innate superiority in cultural, technical, intellectual, and even religious, terms, over the native inhabitants of the colonised lands, went unquestioned. The Zionists have been consistently criticised for the colonial nature of their project and attitudes (eg. Finkelstein 2003b, pp.111-2; Said 1979, pp.15-37), but these reflected a trend of their times, albeit they had the misfortune or lack of foresight to be at the tail-end of that trend (Gelvin 2005, p.60; Novick 2000, pp.153-4; Rose 2005, pp.82-4; Said 1979, pp.56-8).

Nationalism, liberalism, socialism and colonialism, as predominant features of the social and intellectual environment of nineteenth century Europe, thus influenced the initial conception and execution of the Zionist enterprise, informing and colouring pre-state organisation and early state infrastructure, and remaining recognisable themes in the development of Israeli society ever since. Writing over a century after the birth of Zionism, Shafir and Peled

(2002, p.1) identify tensions in contemporary Israeli society between three principles, namely: the universalist commitment to western style democracy; the particularist commitment to being a Jewish state; and the colonial character of the Zionist state. These “partly contradictory political goals and commitments” (p.2) of democracy, ethno-nationalism and colonialism, are directly traceable to the paradigms of nineteenth century European society.

Powerful Friends

For most of the twentieth century, the Jews in Palestine and, subsequently, the State of Israel, enjoyed a considerable degree of support and protection from major global powers, first Britain during the mandate period, and then America from the Cold War era. The British had offered the Zionists a sympathetic ear from the early days of their project, demonstrated by the proposal of territory in British East Africa as a possible settlement option (Berry and Philo 2006, p.4; Gilbert 2008, pp. 21-2; Harms and Ferry 2005, p.56), and then, by the Balfour Declaration of 1917, later incorporated into the mandate for Palestine, giving official British support to “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”. Though doubtless motivated by sympathy with the Zionist position, this declaration also served as a strategic move in terms of gaining support for British aims and interests in the Middle East from Russia and America, both of which were against imperial hegemony and for national self-determination, and both of which had large Jewish populations which might play a part in influencing national attitudes to the first world war (Berry and Philo 2006, pp.6-7; Gelvin 2005, pp.80-6; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.68-71; Smith 2007, pp.72-91).

By the time of the second world war, Britain felt the need to review its policy towards the Arabs in the light of Nazi and fascist attempts to garner support in the Middle East, and, in the White Paper of 1939, strict controls were put on Jewish immigration to Palestine for a five-year period, and the clear announcement made that it was never intended for Palestine to become a Jewish state against the will of the Arab population (Gelvin 2005, pp.116-8; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.77-81; Shindler 2008, pp.31, 34-5; Smith 2007,

pp.124-51). Although the Zionists perceived this as betrayal, they had done well out of twenty years of British rule, having been permitted to set up a quasi-state infrastructure in the yishuv (Gilbert 2008, pp.45-98; Kimmerling 2001, pp.65-7; Shindler 2008, pp.30-7), and encouraged to develop a military capacity, trained by the British and deployed to help them quell the rebellious Arab community during the later stages of the Great Arab Revolt of 1936-9 (Shindler 2008, p.36; Smith 2007, p.145). They were thus in a good position to take advantage of the mandate power's exhausted and weakened state, depleted of resources and beleaguered by problems around its global empire, at the end of the war.

As with the first world war, the second resulted in a major redistribution of global power, this time from the European Great Powers of the interwar era to the two new superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union. The Suez crisis of 1956 effectively marked the demise of Britain and France as dominant forces in the Middle East (Berry and Philo 2006, pp.41-3; Gilbert 2008, pp.306-31; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.106-7; Smith 2007, pp.245-54), and thereafter the region became a theatre for the playing out of Cold War interests. By the 1960s both United States politicians and the American public viewed the Middle East in terms of potential Soviet threat, and began to regard Israel as a pro-western bulwark which could counteract Soviet influence there (Christison 2001, p.102; Smith, 2007, p.253). The US policy of maintaining a balance between Soviet and American interests in the region resulted in Israel being supplied with copious amounts of American economic aid and military assistance in an effort to counterbalance Soviet aid to Egypt, Iraq and Syria (Gelvin 2005, p.180; Harms and Ferry 2005, p.108; Shindler 2008, pp.155, 170-1; Smith 2007, p.282). In the 1970s, Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy was aimed at marginalising the Soviet Union's role in the Middle East while furthering the American position as a valuable ally mediating in the interests of all parties (Gelvin 2005, pp.228-9; Harms and Ferry 2005, pp.120-6; Smith 2007, pp. 324-6, 329-31).

Even after the Cold War came to an abrupt end with the implosion of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s, and the level of Arab-Israeli conflict reduced accordingly to leave the Israeli-Palestinian conflict centre stage by the 1990s,

the US maintained its supportive role: American economic and military assistance continued to pour into Israel (Christison 2001, pp.107-8,132-3,145-6, 218-9, 261, 266, 281, 284; Gelvin 2005, p.170; Shindler 2008, pp. 218-9); the US maintained a steady record of voting in Israel's interests, or at the very least not against them, at the United Nations (Christison 2001, pp. 134, 262-3, 281-2); and it consistently sought to reject or play down any international condemnations or criticisms of Israel's behaviour, while simultaneously underwriting such questionable Israeli policies as land expropriations and settlements (Berry and Philo 2006, p.125-7; Christison 2001, p.293). Meanwhile, although generally perceived as significantly biased towards Israel as a result of these actions, it continued to put itself forward as mediator in all of Israel's negotiations with the Palestinians.

Christison (2001, pp.291-3) asks what wars in the region could have been avoided over the last half of the twentieth century if America's approach had been less biased and more balanced. Certainly, the US, for a variety of reasons, including the crossing by Jews of "the river of power in the US" (Burg 2008, pp.194-5) and the American "perceptual predispositions" (Christison 2001) to see the Middle East through Israeli eyes, has traditionally adopted the Israeli perspective when dealing with issues which involve Israel. But, like the British before them, the Americans have ultimately acted in their own interests, pursuing policies which have done little to pressurise or persuade Israel into the kind of accommodation and compromise necessary to realistically and viably sustaining its position as an essentially European state in an Arab region.

The Neighbours

Nor were any checks and balances exerted on Israel's evolution by its Arab neighbours. The emergent Arab states were neither strong enough nor united enough to stand up to Israel in its early days, preoccupied as they were by domestic problems and engaged in competitive power games with each other (Lewis 1995, pp.348, 372; Smith 2007, pp.236-9). Nevertheless, they displayed a natural resistance to accept Israel as a permanent fixture,

viewing this European invasion as yet another unjustifiable incursion into Arab territory on a par with the crusades (Khalidi 1997, pp. 13, 152; Kimmerling and Migdal 2003, pp. 318-9; Said 1979, p.10). As a result, the Arab states were subject to the same American and Soviet manipulation as was Israel during the Cold War decades. With the emphasis on maintaining the balance of power in the region, any Arab-Israeli crisis was quickly contained, but there was no movement towards any form of long-term solution or accommodation. The rise of the PLO, for reasons detailed in the preceding chapter, failed to have much effect on the Israeli stance, while a series of autocratic regimes, many supported by the west and crumbling only now, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, served to maintain the status quo in the Arab world, a situation alternatively perceivable as stability or stagnation.

Relatively weak and disorganised though the Arabs may have been, they presented formidable foes when seen through the Israeli lens. All the talk of driving the Jews into the sea, as in the run-up to the 1967 war, was taken literally. Any mismatch between Arab rhetoric and Arab capacity may simply have been unrecognisable to a European people, ignorant of the Middle East, who had learned to their cost in Europe that seemingly exaggerated words could be matched, if not surpassed, by deeds. This inability to fully recognise the reality of the Arabs as people in their own right persists. Rose (2005, p.133) maintains that the Palestinians are, for the Israelis, “symbolic substitutes, stand-ins, ‘fall guys’ for something no longer spoken out loud, something quite else”. Ellis (1990, p.24) refers to the Arabs existing “as highlights for Israeli heroism, not as flesh-and-blood casualties”. That Israel could continue for so long in a bubble of illusion based on largely outdated fears and outmoded notions has to be partly attributed to the influence of its powerful friends, the effects of whose ongoing support are perhaps to be seen not so much in terms of protecting a vulnerable, grief-stricken nation as of stifling that nation’s capacity for any confrontation with and accommodation of the practical realities of its post-loss situation.

Summary

To what extent can the contours of a typical grief trajectory be traced in accounts of the post-holocaust history of the Jews? Although world Jewry at the beginning of the twentieth century was too geographically dispersed and culturally disparate to be termed a unified people, the vast majority of its population could be counted as European, mainly Central or East European. These Jews shared a centuries-long collective history of marginalisation, discrimination, persecution and expulsion, to an extent that anti-semitism was almost a defining characteristic, loss and suffering a feature of their collective identity. The holocaust can be regarded as a climax to this history, its industrial-scale programme of systematic dehumanisation and extermination inflicting upon the Jews of Europe loss of an absolute kind, the loss of basic ontological security about having a place in the world.

Historical accounts of the post-holocaust years indicate an initial silence covering a variety of emotional responses: shock, bewilderment and disorientation; a problem-focussed preoccupation with post-war practical concerns; and a sense of shame at what the Jews had allowed themselves to become. By the 1960s, the Eichmann trial and the victory of the Six Days' War in Israel had broken this silence and provided outlets for Jewish anger, pride and confidence. But a victor-victim ambiguity persisted, with the constant fear of vulnerability fuelling a perpetual drive for security. The State of Israel itself can be seen as a manifestation of the collective Jewish attempt to make sense of the post-holocaust world by securing for themselves a safe place in it. As a nation of and for Jews, it presented an opportunity to move on from the holocaust and the centuries of suffering, instability and insecurity that preceded it. But "fortress Israel" has proved to be obsessed with security and self-defence, exhibiting in a more aggressive and militaristic way the same fundamental determination to avoid vulnerability that also inspired the "fortress-like mentality" of the American Jewish community in their bid to acquire collective power, wealth and prestige in their host society.

In grief terms, this presents similarities to "complicated" grieving, where the griever is stuck in maladaptive behaviour patterns based on his former

assumptive world, and seems unable to adjust to what any onlooker would perceive as the current realities of his circumstances. Moreover, the international political context, rife with self-interest, has not served to support Israel's adaptation to the realities of its situation as a culturally diverse Jewish state, based on a nineteenth century European concept, set in a twenty-first century Arab world. If the contours of Jewish and Israeli post-holocaust history can be accepted as indicative of collective grief, then it is grief gone wrong. Not only is there a demonstrable failure to move on from loss, but the State of Israel, with its official focus on the holocaust, would seem to have placed loss at the centre of collective consciousness and tried to form collective identity around it.

6. THE PICTURE TODAY: CONTEMPORARY ISRAELI AND PALESTINIAN VISUAL ARTS

“Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts – the book of their deeds, the book of their words and the book of their art.”

John Ruskin

Chapters one and two established the basic link between history and identity, the fact that who an individual is or a people are essentially amounts to what they have done in the past and how they have responded to what may have happened to them. The aim of this chapter is to ascertain whether any evidence can be drawn from current Palestinian and Israeli national identity to support the indications of the elements of the grief experience traceable in their national histories as outlined in the preceding two chapters. Do current Israeli and Palestinian national identities reflect any of the grief-triggering losses, reactions to those losses, or the meanings created to make sense of their respective post-loss worlds over the past sixty to seventy years? In order to seek an answer to this question, the work of nationally and internationally recognised Israeli and Palestinian contemporary visual artists will be used to supply data on current national identity.

A general rationale for the use of contemporary forms of visual culture as a data source for gathering evidence on the characteristics and preoccupations of national identity at any given point in time is presented in chapter three (pp.96-100). However, it is perhaps worth noting that a focus on the visual arts might also be regarded as particularly pertinent to a study essentially concerned with loss. For the founding myth of the visual arts in western culture, that of the potter's daughter, or the maid of Corinth, recounted in Pliny's Natural History (Bettini 1999, p.9; Salzman 2006, pp.1-5), inextricably links them with resistance to loss. The daughter of Butades, a potter of Corinth, had fallen in love with a man who was about to depart on a long

journey overseas. The night before his departure, she traced the contours of her sleeping lover's face on the wall from the silhouette of his shadow cast by the candlelight, creating, in anticipation of her loss, something of him to hold on to in his absence. Additionally, her father made a clay relief, which he subsequently fired, from the wall drawing. Thus both drawing and the plastic arts were born from a desire to nail down and hold on to transient experience.

The particular rationale for using contemporary visual arts in relation to Palestinian and Israeli national identity is also outlined in chapter three (pp.98-9), and some of the main points bear repetition. Both nations can lay claim to a particularly vibrant, rich and internationally-acclaimed visual arts scene at the moment. Living in circumstances where the political situation is a vital and inescapable facet of everyday life means that many of these artists, certainly a large proportion of those whose work is both displayed in major galleries at home and exhibited internationally, are "border-crossers", with powerful social messages to convey. Because they are challenging or querying the status quo, their work can be regarded as providing sites for negotiation, affording an insight into tensions between contending views over important collective issues. This similarly applies to those artists who do not live full-time in their countries of origin but still feel a sufficiently strong Palestinian or Israeli identity to focus a large amount of their work there and in so doing offer comment from their own specific and equally valid standpoints.

Bearing in mind the potter's daughter, the particular wealth and vibrancy of the Israeli and Palestinian contemporary visual arts scenes might be put down to the existence of a high level of loss, both actual and anticipated, within these societies. It could also, however, be partly attributed to the relative newness and freshness of the modern visual arts as channels of expression for both peoples. Until the earlier part of the twentieth century the Islamic and Jewish religious traditions respectively had dictated what were acceptable and appropriate forms of visual culture, but as western and secular influences increased in both Palestinian and Israeli society, there was more experimentation with non-traditional art forms until both cohorts of

national artists were working with the media of the global visual arts scene, using them to deliver their own unique national messages.

The traditional Arab culture of the Palestinians was based on the word, as both an oral and visual entity, since Islam teaches that “the word of God is the only reality in an ephemeral world, and, by implication, that all the works of man, including works of art, are vain” (Honour and Fleming 1984, p.334). Artistic representation of the worthless material world was viewed variously as a pointless exercise, idolatry, or attempted usurpation of creative power. Islamic arts traditionally focussed on what western culture might term crafts, including architecture, calligraphy, mosaic, weaving, stained glass and wood-carving, and were largely employed for the glorification of the divine. Although Christian Arabs practised icon-making from the seventeenth century, such art forms as painting, drawing, sculpture and photography were largely nineteenth century European introductions (Boullata 1977, 1997, 2000). Ankori (2006, pp.23-46) describes how, at the beginning of the twentieth century, European influences began to creep into Palestinian visual culture and several artists managed to interweave or juxtapose them with their own long-established traditions of religious art. The nakba of 1948 put a stop to any real evolution that might have occurred along these lines and, from the 1950s, Palestinian artists, scattered around the world, mirrored the fragmentation of their people, working in a variety of styles which reflected the influences of their new surroundings as well as their cultural origins. In addition, a great many of them used their art as a political weapon in the national cause (Halaby 2001).

Jewish visual culture is perceived as being traditionally influenced by the Second Commandment: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth”, to such an extent, Bland (2001) would argue, that the “artless Jew” has become almost a commonplace of modern thinking for both Jew and non-Jew alike. However, as with the Islamic approach, this restriction does not imply a lack of visual culture and aesthetic, simply a tradition that did not conform to accepted European definitions of artistic form and function. Thus, in tracing the history

of Israeli art back to its relatively recent origins, when the Bezalel Academy was established by the Zionists in Jerusalem in 1906 as a school of art and design, it initially concentrated on the promotion of what western culture might term crafts. But the subsequent arrival of increasing numbers of Jewish immigrants from Europe, bringing their secular European influences with them, soon led to the greater development of European art forms and the beginnings of a uniquely Israeli tradition of visual art. From early works depicting glowingly optimistic views of their Biblical-oriental environment and its Arab occupants, through the post-1948 international-art-world-oriented abstraction of the New Horizons group, to the growing dominance of conceptual art from the 1970s on, this tradition consistently responded to the situations and events of Israeli history and, in constant tension between the local and the global, sought to define the elusive Israeli identity. (Aviv 2010, pp.20-2; explanatory video playing in the Israeli Art Gallery of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem, October 2010)

The remainder of this chapter examines the dominant messages and themes of the canons of Israeli and Palestinian contemporary visual art side by side. This is not necessarily to invite comparison between them, but rather because they tend to have topics and motifs in common. Given the unique status of Israeli Palestinians, some of whose work can feature simultaneously in the Israel Museum and in international exhibitions of Palestinian art, they even have artists in common. Although the two bodies of work differ in terms of particularities and perspectives, each artistic corpus deals with essentially the same physical terrain and with the abnormalities of daily life occasioned by the same situation of conflict; each treats the themes of need for a homeland and of a vision for the future; and each touches on problems of injustice and inequality in society. These will be explored under the general headings of the Land, the Life and the Dream.

The Land

The land is a major theme in contemporary Israeli and Palestinian art. It is treated in the abstract, emotionally-loaded sense of homeland, of having a

place in the world to belong to, and also as the physical terrain of that particular part of the Middle East where both Palestinians and Israelis live. For Palestinian artists, especially those in exile, scattered around the world far from their geographical point of origin, the lack of homeland is a recurrent message. But Israeli artists also serve up reminders that much of Israeli society has memories of another home, and that, in addition, Jewish history entails centuries of homelessness. With regard to the physical terrain that is inhabited by both peoples, there is a distinct divergence of perspective on the same landscape. The Palestinian artists describe a place of historic beauty and vitality, intricately linked with the Palestinian being, though blotted by the marks of Israeli occupation. The Israeli depictions tend in two directions: one is of a place not quite real or solid, not quite “theirs”; the other is of an ugly landscape, spoiled by the forces of militarisation and commercialisation.

The Palestinian Homeland

The first time Palestine officially participated in the Venice Biennale, one of the world’s foremost international platforms for contemporary art, in 2009, it was under the title of “Palestine c/o Venice”, underscoring, as curator Salwa Mikdadi (2009) explains in the catalogue text, its chronic impermanence as a nation. The postal allusion reflecting a lack of permanent residence was used as a metaphor for the Palestinian condition, a nation functioning for over a century c/o colonial powers, Israeli occupation and neighbouring Arab countries.

Although this was the first Palestinian participation as a nation in the Biennale, there had previously been individual contributions from Palestinian artists. In 2003, Sandi Hilal, a Bethlehem-born architect, was asked, along with her Italian husband, Alessandro Petti, who had worked extensively in the Palestinian territories, to contribute a project representing Palestine. This was a significant challenge, given that the Biennale is an exhibition based on nation-states and that Palestine was a nation without a state. The chosen solution was to mount a display of ten huge travel documents and passports, each different, each representing a Palestinian, or, more correctly, lack of

Palestinian status, whether in the diaspora, the occupation or the “alienation”, as they termed the situation of Palestinians living in Israel. The pieces included Lebanese travel documents, a Jordanian passport for Palestinians, and Jerusalem’s special ID card, and all ten were scattered on the spaces in between the official national pavilions, physically representing the Palestinian position of inhabiting the cracks in the international order. (Hilal and Petti 2003a and b)

The same motif of citizenship documentation is employed in Rula Halawani’s iconic “Palestinian I Am” (2003). An artist born and bred in Jerusalem, working at Birzeit University in Ramallah, she had applied at age eighteen for an official travel document. This showed her place of birth as Jerusalem and gave her nationality as Jordanian. To add insult to injury, the details were in English and Hebrew, with no Arabic anywhere on the card. Enlarged and printed on canvas, this is now an exhibition piece, usually installed on the floor, inviting the spectator to trample on it (d’Autreppe 2008, p.19).

For Palestinian artists based in Palestine/Israel, the homeland theme is expressed largely in such concretely material terms, but for artists in the diaspora, its expression tends to be more abstract, and the historic event of the nakba assumes greater importance. Steve Sabella, a Jerusalem-born artist now based in London, captures the fragmentation of his native city, of his people and of the individual Palestinian psyche in his “In Exile” series (2008). Using a complex technique of photomontage, whereby he deconstructs the familiar in order to recompose it into a new reality, Sabella gives visual form to a disorientated and dislocated state of mind, a vertiginous condition of fragmentation and alienation which characterises exile. In one of the prints from the series (fig.1), he takes photographs at different angles of the view of windows from his London flat, then pieces bits of the different images together again until he arrives at something that reflects his identity, fragmented, yet somehow held together (Ravel 2010).

Mona Hatoum, an internationally established artist, born in Haifa, raised in Beirut, now living and working between London and Berlin, deals with many global issues in her work, but the loss of her homeland is a recurrent theme.

One of its simplest and most striking expressions, displayed in the “Palestine: Creativity in all its States” exhibition at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris in 2009, combines her abiding motif of maps with her “carpets” series preoccupation of the 1990s. Part of her “Present Tense” (1996), a small rug with a brightly-coloured map of the world woven into it has a small threadbare patch in the middle where the material has been removed from the area that would be Palestine/Israel.

Emily Jacir, born in Baghdad, raised in Saudi Arabia, now holder of an American passport living and working between New York and Ramallah, has many iconic works to her name, all politically focussed on what it means to be a Palestinian in today’s world. Her “Memorial to 418 Palestinian Villages Destroyed, Depopulated and Occupied by Israel in 1948” (2001) (fig.2) speaks for itself. She set up a tent, of the standard variety issued to refugees by the United Nations, in her New York studio and invited people, both fellow-Palestinians and sympathisers and well-wishers of other nationalities, to come by and embroider on the roof and sides of the tent in plain black thread the names of the various villages. The embroiderers then signed and dated a book kept inside the tent, recreating community in commemoration of the communities that had been lost in the nakba.

Larissa Sansour, born in Jerusalem, now Copenhagen-based, working mainly with video and digital photography, devotes a significant amount of her work to the exploration of Palestinian diaspora identity. Her video “A Space Exodus” (fig.3) treats this theme with a poignant mix of humour, hope, pride and despair. In a film sequence reminiscent of “A Space Odyssey” and of the first American landing on the moon, the artist, dressed in a spacesuit, descends the stairs of her craft to a background track of oriental music and plants a Palestinian flag on the surface of the moon with the announcement that “This is one small step for Palestinians, but one giant leap for mankind”. At the end of the video, trying to make contact with base, “We have a problem, Jerusalem”, the artist-spacewoman floats off into space, losing contact altogether “Come in, Jerusalem, come in”. The whole metaphor brings to mind the account, from the reports of the Israeli Lieutenant Colonel Dov Yirmiah during the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, of Israeli military guards

abusing Palestinian prisoners and shouting at them “You want a state? Build it on the moon!” (cited in Chomsky 1999, p.240)

(Fig.1. Sabella, In Exile, 2008. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.2. Jacir, Memorial to 418 Palestinian Villages, 2001.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.3. Sansour, Space Exodus, 2008. Image has been removed.)

The Palestinian Physical Terrain

The land of Palestine prior to 1948 is presented as a place of outstanding natural beauty. Samia Halaby, one of an older generation of established Palestinian artists, born in Jerusalem now based in New York, demonstrates this in her twelve foot long “Palestine, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River” (2003), which she has contributed to several recent international exhibitions of Palestinian art. The piece is a composition of acrylic painted pieces of canvas and paper in organic shapes which are glued or sewn together in long strips. Each installation involves a re-sewing and re-gluing of the same pieces to produce a different version of the work, though always retaining the same colour palette of sunny yellows and oranges, forest greens and dark blues. The title refers to the extent of Palestine’s territory before 1948, and serves to remind viewers that “the current map of the region, pocked with settlements and ripped with bypass roads and the apartheid wall is only temporary” (Zurur 2008, p.51).

Rula Halawani draws contrasts between the land as it was before 1948, and as it is now. Her series “Presence and Impressions” (2010) (fig.4) comprises nine diptychs, each coupling a pre-1948 photograph of a Palestinian village landscape with her 2009 shot of the same view, the original village having disappeared or been destroyed in the interim. In the recent photographs, there are fences, lampposts, telegraph poles, modern highways and buildings, and vistas of modern agricultural land. The pre-1948 olive trees have been replaced by a more European variety of forestation. While the pre-1948 scenes contain a few human figures, there is no-one to be seen in the twenty-first century ones. Moreover, the Arab villages seem to blend in with the surrounding landscape, the contemporary shots coming across in much harsher contrast, with the features of both vegetation and architecture more sharply delineated against their background. “Standing amongst the ruins of what was once a beautiful place takes your breath away” (Halawani 2010, p.9)

In earlier work, Halawani featured the landscape as a backdrop for the Palestinian people in their everyday lives. Her “Life through a Lens”

photographs (1989-2008) capture details and moments of daily life both indoors and outdoors, featuring in the latter the olive trees, gardens, mountain villages and fishing beaches of Palestine. But increasingly, people are absent from her frame, a response to Israel's attempt "to eradicate Palestinian society" (d'Autreppe 2008, p.19) and consume the former features of the landscape (Hammami 2008, p.7). The theme of disfigurement of the landscape also informs her "Irrational" photographs (2003), a series of blurred studies which seek to focus on an olive tree or a contour of the landscape and thus avoid the ugliness of the roads and settlements that surround and lie behind them: "The landscape of Palestine that I grew up with is gone All I can see now are newly developed, ugly constructions" (Halawani 2008, p.67).

Ugly or not, the landscape and its people persist. This is the message of Noel Jabbour's "Palestina" (2007) series. Jabbour, born in Nazareth, now based in Berlin, is best known for her interior studies, as in "Palestinian Interiors" (1995) and "Vacant Seats" (2000-1). But "Palestina" comprises a variety of outdoor shots, mostly with people posing against the landscape or going about their everyday business within it. In the catalogue text accompanying these photographs in the exhibition "Palestine: Creativity in all its States" at the Bahrain National Museum, 2010, she refers directly to Edward Said's statement "There is no getting away from the fact that as an idea, a memory, and as an often buried or invisible reality, Palestine and its people have simply not disappeared." (cited on p.27)

The persistence of Palestine and its people is also a theme of Raeda Saadeh's "Vacuum" (2007) (fig.5). In this 17 minute video, Saadeh, an Israeli Palestinian, meticulously works a vacuum cleaner through the desert hills of Palestine. She slowly approaches from a distance, the menacing hum of the cleaner always audible in the background, in a piece which conveys messages about the female role and about human inconsequentiality by contrast to nature's power, but which also states categorically that "this place is here and it is inhabited by a Palestinian" (Nasrallah 2010).

For many Palestinian artists, the Palestinians and their land are not only interdependent but completely integrated in a blood-and-soil relationship. Muhammad Hawajri, born and raised in al Burej refugee camp in Gaza, created his "Tales of a Tree" series in 2002, at a time when the Israeli authorities were uprooting the fruit trees that provided many Palestinians with their sole source of income. These abstract works in mixed media of painting and photography are based on the physical composition of a tree trunk, and anthropomorphise the tree so that the viewer can experience it as a living body, albeit an ancient one that has seen many cycles of death and rebirth. Meanwhile, Ra'ed Issa, another young artist from the camps of Gaza, in his "Martyrs" series (2000) of seven paintings and ninety-nine sketches of the mutilated bodies of people killed during the Intifada (Boullata 2004, p.76), transforms the serene pose of dead youths into the contours of landscapes. The people and their land are one.

This theme is expanded by the use of the natural resources of the land as artistic media. The ubiquitous indigenous cactus, a hardy plant which grows where it is thrown and clings tenaciously to existence, features in the work of several artists. Rana Bishara, an Israeli Palestinian artist who works with a variety of media, is particularly well-known for the use of cactus in her work as a symbol of Palestinian endurance and patience (the word cactus means patience in Arabic) in the face of hardship. Some of her best-known pieces include "Sweetie" (1999), a cactus leaf with its lower half enrobed in chocolate, denoting the sweetness of the land that cannot be got at because of the Israeli occupation; "Ticktus Palestine" (1998/9) (fig.6), a cactus leaf with an egg timer embedded in it, highlighting the critical passage of time since 1948; and "Homage to Palestine" (1998) (fig.6), pieces of chopped cactus in a sealed jar, representing the Palestinians trapped in the West Bank, Gaza, or refugee camps in other countries (Halaka 2008, pp.90-7; Tuqan 2009, pp.34-41).

And, of course, there is Suleiman Mansour, Palestine's most renowned artist, who, in the late 1980s, after a long career in figurative oil painting, took to using earth and straw as an artistic medium. This development was motivated partly by a felt need for change on the part of a small group of

Palestinian artists forming the “New Visions” movement of the time; partly by a decision to find a locally sourced substitute for foreign western art materials procured through Israel; and partly by an intuitive desire to create national art from the very soil of his homeland (Ankori 2006, pp.60-92). Discarding colour from his work in the early 1990s, as his optimism about the Palestinian situation dwindled, Mansour went on to create some of his most iconic works, such as the reliefs of “Hagar” (1996) and “I, Ishmael” (1997), the revered ancestor of the Arab peoples and son of Abraham and Hagar, from wood and mud. These mud figures contain an inherent promise of Palestinian rebirth from the earth, in the same way as Ishmael was revived in the desert by water, but the fact that they are dry and cracked turns them into “emblems of decay....waiting their ultimate return to earth” (Mansour 2000, p.38).

(Fig.4. Halawani, Presence and Impressions, 2010.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.5. Saadeh, Vacuum, 2007. Image has been removed.)

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(Fig.6. Bishara, Ticktus Palestinus and Homage to Palestine, 1998-9.

Images have been removed.)

The Israeli Homeland

Although Eretz Israel was intended as a homeland for Jews, and regarded by many as the rightful homeland they had been expelled from prior to their two thousand year exile, the work of several contemporary visual artists would appear to reflect the fact that there are other concepts of homeland in the modern Israeli collective consciousness. Shai Aloni, an established Israeli photographer, exhibited in the early 2000s a series of photographs he had taken of recent Russian immigrants, part of the influx of the preceding decade, in Afula, the capital of his native Jezreel Valley. One of these features a giant photograph of a forest view and snowy mountains, a Russian landscape of memory, affixed to the living room wall in a family home. Erez Israeli, an interdisciplinary artist working in a wide field of visual media, touches on this theme in his photo-etching "Friday Night" (2009) (fig.7). The native-born Israeli expresses here a collective memory of the Europeans who immigrated to Israel, with a European forest as a backdrop to the dining table, and a train running around the table: "I tried to combine the image of the dining room table with a real landscape of European forests deeply rooted in my consciousness when I think of landscape in the context of Jewish identity. It is surprising to me that when one thinks of landscape in the context of Jewish identity, one thinks of a European rather than an Israeli landscape." (artist's comment in Landscape exhibition catalogue, Petach Tikva Museum of Art, 2009)

Yehudit Sasportas, of Moroccan-Jewish origin, brought up in Ashdod, now living in Berlin, has used her personal experience of homeland as a basis for universalising the themes of displacement and definition of borders. One of her earlier works, "The Carpenter and the Seamstress" (2000) (fig.8), an abstract room-scale installation more akin to architecture than painting or sculpture, refers to the floorplan of the public housing apartment that her parents, the characters of the title, were allocated on their arrival in Israel. The various coloured panels and three-dimensional features of the piece mix austere, angular, geometric spaces with more sensual, flowing, patterned decoration, representing the family's struggle to adapt the culture and visual sensibilities of North Africa to the modern, utopian vision of Israel. Sasportas

seeks to show that in this context the visual codes of oriental culture are emptied of their content and remain on a two-dimensional level of a shell or a skin, which itself becomes in turn a new and independent site, a state of “synthetic authenticity” (artist’s statements from *The Carpenter and the Seamstress II* exhibition catalogue, Deitch Projects, New York, 2001). Building on her own experience of the processes of de-culturation and re-culturation taking place in Israel, her work gives this phenomenon universal resonance, questioning the meanings of “home” in a globalised twenty-first century of flux and movement (Jacobson 2002; Klein 2006; Schwabsky 2003).

The archetypal Jew is the wandering Jew, and video artist Guy Ben-Ner references this in his “Elia – A Story of an Ostrich Chick” (2003) (fig.9). Filmed in a park outside his flat in New York, and based on the style of Walt Disney nature documentaries of the 1960s, this piece sees the artist and his family transformed with the aid of costumes into an ostrich family, forever wandering around seeking better places to feed. The film was directly motivated by the artist’s move from Israel to New York, and he refers to himself as the “Eternal Jew”, always on the move in search of better living conditions. (Atlan 2008, pp. 85-91)

Constant movement serves to evoke an existential homelessness in Michal Rovner’s multi-channel video installation “Time Left” (2002) (fig.10). Israeli-born Rovner, now living and working between Israel and New York, uses a variety of media, but is best known for her photography and video pieces, specialising in degraded images, re-photographed and re-mastered until her figures become emblematic, almost abstract forms, more appropriate to remembrance than representation (Camhi 2004). “Time Left” is a mesmerising projection on the walls of a darkened room of row after row of such miniature human figures, hand in hand, marching ceaselessly round the perimeter of the room to no obvious destination, with a droning electronic soundscape as background. At first glance, they appear more like calligraphy or “ongoing endless text” (Tusa 2003), but their procession, once recognised, brings to mind diasporas, expulsions and mass movements of people (Particles of Reality exhibition catalogue, DHC/ART Foundation for

Contemporary Art, Montreal, 2009), or simply humanity trapped in the continuous cycles of time (Gal 2009, pp.87-8).

(Fig.7. Israeli, Friday Night, 2009. Image has been removed.)

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(Fig.8. Sasportas, The Carpenter and the Seamstress, 2000.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.9. Ben-Ner, Elia – A Story of an Ostrich Chick, 2003.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.10. Rovner, Time Left, 2002. Image has been removed.)

The Physical Terrain of Israel

The physical landscape of Israel is, for some artists, not quite real. Sigalit Landau, one of Israel's foremost visual arts practitioners, who explores the rich and varied symbolism of her environment in her work, describes her country as "a kind of non-place....a crystallised chunk of stories more than a place" (Camhi 2008). The photographer Ori Gersht, Israeli-born now based in New York, in his "Ghost-Olive" series (2003-4) (fig.11), transforms olive trees, ancient and sacred symbols of strength on the land, into ethereal images of fragile beauty by taking his pictures in the mid-day sun, when contrast is low, and by using very long exposures. The resulting image is so delicate it almost dissolves before the eyes. (Goodman 2007, pp.25-6; Wecker 2009) Yaron Leshem undermines assumptions about the authenticity of the landscape with his fifteen-foot lightbox work "Village" (2004) (fig.12). At first glance, this appears to be a Palestinian village nestling on a hillside, but closer inspection reveals it to be an Israeli Defence Force training installation with false building facades and painted figures. (Goodman 2007, p.27) A similar trompe l'oeil effect informs Shai Kremer's "Shooting Defence Wall" (2004), a photograph of a section of the separation wall between Gilo neighbourhood in Jerusalem and the Palestinian territories, which has been painted with trees and walls and houses in order to blend in with the surrounding landscape (Cats 2010, pp.104-5).

For others, the landscape is a temporary phenomenon, on loan. "Borrowed Scenery" (2004) (fig.13) by Tel Aviv-based performance and installation artist Nelly Agassi, has associations with borrowed finery since it incorporates her signature dress motif, and with the borrowed scenery of Japanese gardening, whereby the surrounding landscape is utilised as part of the garden design. The artist is attached by a series of long white ribbons to a collection of large rocks so that they appear to form part of her dress. Hadas Maor (2002), in the curatorial text to her exhibition Palace of Tears at Ein Harod Museum of Art, observes that her recurrent dress motif is symbolic of the need to strip off external layers of protection in order to be open and freely exposed to the potential for change. The piece can therefore be interpreted as a reference to

the stifling and inappropriate situation of being defined by such a temporary feature as the surrounding environment.

A recognition of the temporary nature of ownership of land also informs Shai Kremer's "Fallen Empires" photographs (2005-10) (fig.14), in which he shows Israeli landscapes as historic palimpsests, referring in their titles to the former imperial powers who have laid claim to them. "The recycling of these spaces, from one conqueror to the next, shows how most of the empires of history tried to conquer and rule this land, with one similar outcome: they failed". (artist's comment in Galerie les Filles du Calvaire catalogue accompanying his exhibits in Paris Photo, 2009)

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(Fig.11. Gersht, Ghost Olive, 2003. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.12. Leshem, Village, 2004. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.13. Agassi, Borrowed Scenery, 2004. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.14. Kremer, Tel Afek, Byzantine, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Crusader, Mamluk, British then Israeli, from *Forgotten Empires* series, 2009. Image has been removed.)

While some artists see the landscape as unreal or illusory, or lay stress on its temporary nature as a defining attribute of its inhabitants, others depict it as all too real, but ugly and contaminated, a symbol of the dystopian situation in Israel. Trees figure large in such works. The notorious New Year's greetings card for 2006 sent out by David Tartakover, a well-known Israeli graphic designer, artist and peace activist, features a picture of hacked-up olive trees in evident contradiction to the quotation from Deuteronomy (8.8) below it: "A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates, a land of olive oil, and honey" (Goodman 2007, pp.22-3). Shai Kremer's panoramic photograph of "Palestinian Olive Trees Beheaded 'due to Security Reasons', East Jerusalem" (2007) (fig.15) shows a green, fertile landscape with regular rows of decapitated olive tree trunks leading the eye towards the horizon, the trees having been felled as part of a routine army exercise to render the area more visible. The olive tree is an Israeli icon, one of the traditional seven native species of the land of Israel, and an international symbol for peace, here destroyed by Israeli military action. Although the regularity of the grid of

stumps stems from agricultural practice, the instant visual impression is its resemblance to a precisely laid out military cemetery (Cats 2010, pp. 102-3; Naveh 2010, pp. 191-2). Photojournalist and artist Miki Kratsman, in his black-and-white photograph, "Territory 3306 13" (2007), sets a bare, leafless tree against a close-up section of the Abu Dis wall, employing a symbol which normally represents life, rootedness and homeland, to create a bleak and claustrophobic effect (Atlan 2008, pp.53-5).

The militarisation of the Israeli landscape is another powerful theme. Shai Kremer, much in the tradition of Roi Kuper, a socially and politically engaged photographer of the previous generation, addresses the military disfiguration of the landscape in his "Infected Landscapes" series (1999-2007) (fig.16). These pictures of training zones, military equipment storage sites, training targets and conflict-damaged buildings, aim to demonstrate how the military leaves its imprint on the Israeli landscape and on Israeli society. "The scars concealed in the landscape correspond to the wounds in the collective unconscious of the country. The landscape, infected with loaded sentiments of the ongoing conflict, becomes a platform for discussion" (artist's comment in Galerie les Filles du Calvaire catalogue accompanying his exhibit in Paris Photo, 2009). Similarly, Gilad Ophir, in his "Works and Days" (2006) series, deals with the effects of military residue on the landscape. His photographs of the wrecked frames of abandoned Bedouin constructions in the desert (fig.17) demonstrate the way in which they use materials disposed of or abandoned by Israeli army military camps to build their temporary housing and thus continue to live illegally in the Negev Desert in settlements unrecognised by the state of Israel. These partially dismantled semi-structures, like piles of junk in the bleak desert landscape, stand, moreover, in sharp contrast to the original Zionist vision of making the desert bloom (Atlan 2008, pp.71-7).

Gal Weinstein, a Tel Aviv-based artist working largely with installation and video pieces, takes iconic Israeli landscapes, such as the Jezreel Valley (2002) (fig.18), the cradle of early twentieth century Zionist settlement; the Hula Valley (2005), a swampy marshland which was dried out in the 1950s in a move felt necessary to agricultural development at the time but later

recognised as an environmental catastrophe; and Nahalal (2005-6), an agricultural community symbolic of the golden age of Zionism, and represents them in a variety of cheap synthetic modern materials, such as office carpeting, synthetic lawn, MDF flooring, PVC, steel wool and various other household materials. Working from photographs, he reproduces large-scale perfect imitations of dried-out swampland and birds' eye view mosaics of fields and tracks. While this form of presentation is an explicit recognition of these sites as household names in Israeli mythology, he is also showing how what was once a fertile natural landscape has been turned into "a barren, synthetic and domesticated surface" (Katz-Freiman 2002).

Some artists have even presented their land as a commodity. David Reeb's "Holy Places" project of the late 1990s comprises a series of black and white acrylic on canvas studies of sites like the Western Wall and the Dome of the Rock, all with the recurring motif of the bar code, the electronic imprint used for encoding the prices of commodities. Around the same time, Arianne Littman-Cohen, in her "Holy Land for Sale" installation, presented 150 bags of Israeli soil in easy-to-carry, handy-size packages for export to America. (Katz-Freiman 1996)

Meir Gal, an Israeli artist, now New York-based, who gained prominence in the 1990s by using his art to protest Israeli Ashkenazi discrimination against the Mizrahim, presents his native land in his "Untitled (Armpit-American)" photograph (2002) (fig.19) as a stain in the shape of the map of Israel painted in black ink on his armpit. He explains on his website (www.meirgal.com, 2010) that this piece "concretises the psychosexual relations between the state and its citizens, the internalisation of the state's memories and priorities over personal history. It illustrates how the state infiltrates, hides and ultimately brands itself using its citizens' bodies". As Maor (2003) observes, this armpit map does not represent a "friendly landscape-place convenient to live in", but rather "an identifying mark, a stigma, an irremovable stain (that) defines and links the artist/model to his native habitat, in the same way that a number or dye are used to brand cows or sheep, defining its identity and affiliating it to a herd and an owner".

(Fig.15. Kremer, Palestinian Olive Trees Beheaded 'due to Security Reasons', East Jerusalem, 2007. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.16. Kremer. Trench 'Chicago' Ground Force Training Zone, 2007, from Infected Landscapes series. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.17. Ophir, Works and Days, 2006. Image has been removed.)

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(Fig.18. Weinstein, The Jezreel Valley, 2002. Image has been removed.)

(Fig. 19. Gal, Untitled (Armpit-American), 2002. Image has been removed.)

The Life

When Israeli and Palestinian visual artists turn to the life of the people living on this land, the major preoccupation appears to be with the absence, in both societies, of the opportunity to lead what might be considered a normal life. Although some of the Palestinian work deals directly with the conflict situation in terms of lives lost and damage inflicted, the majority dwells on aspects of the struggle for normal everyday living given the difficulties, obstacles and frustrations of the occupation environment. For Israeli artists, meanwhile, the focus is on the militarisation ingrained in their society as a result of the conflict, and the challenge to survive the brutal realities of a life in which war, violence, death and chaos are commonplace. Both bodies of work feature the routine presence of social injustice and discrimination as a prevalent theme. For the Palestinian artists, this centres on the treatment of Palestinians under Israeli occupation and control, while Israeli artists turn the spotlight on their own society, on the disregard for the interests of minority groups and on the economic inequalities between various cultural sub-groups.

Palestinians: Effects of the Conflict

Rana Bishara's "Blindfolded History" (2003), first shown at the Made in Palestine Exhibition in Houston in 2003, comprises a set of glass panels, one for each year since the nakba, suspended precariously from the ceiling on monofilament lines. These are silkscreened in chocolate, a material used by the artist because of its similarity to dried blood, with iconic images of violence, oppression and resistance taken, over years of conflict, from news sites such as Al-Jazeera and a selection of human rights websites. (Mikdadi-Nashashibi 2003; Nasar 2003) This history of death and bloodshed becomes more personal in Noel Jabbour's "Vacant Seats" (2000-1) series of photographs (fig.20), large-scale portraits of Palestinian families who have lost members to the conflict. The families stand, frozen and formal in their grief, their missing member represented by a photograph of the martyr, held by another family member or visible in the background (Zurur 2008).

Suleiman Mansour's "Garden of Hope" (2002), a large broken clay slab with a regular pattern of rows of red roses painted on it, was exhibited in the Made in Palestine exhibition directly in front of his six clay and wood reliefs of Ismail, son of Abraham and Hagar, and founder of the Arab race. Harithas (2003), in his exhibition catalogue introduction, interprets this piece as a memorial in which the roses "pay homage to the heroism of the martyrs as the foundation of independent Palestine". Nasar (2003), in his essay in the same catalogue, sees them as symbolising "a fruitful Ismail", and links them with his observation that as Ismail's erection grows in the series of reliefs, the cracks in the mud of which he is made seem to diminish. Death and life appear to be intricately linked in the same piece.

Vera Tamari's "Tale of a Tree" (1999-2006) (fig.21) has a similar format, but focuses on the destruction and re-growth of olive trees. A large black and white photo-transfer of an olive tree on plexiglass hangs on the wall, and on a plexiglass base on the floor in front of it stand hundreds of small ceramic trees about three inches high, in a variety of different colours. While referencing the destruction of hundreds of olive trees by Israeli settlers and military forces, this piece also evokes hope in the prolific sprouting growth on

the ground (Harithas 2003; Mikdadi-Nashabishi 2003). A personal angle on such destruction is Suha Shoman's video "Bayyaratina" (Our Groves) (2009). Jerusalem-born, brought up and educated in Egypt, Beirut and Paris, now living and working in Jordan, Shoman had a distinguished career as a painter before moving into installation art in the 1990s and video art from 2005. This eight-minute piece remembers her family's orange groves, bought by her grandfather, planted by him, then her father, and laments this "paradise lost" (Khazindar 2010, p.35) after the Israelis, in the years following the outbreak of the second intifada in 2002, confiscate the land and tear down all the trees to facilitate a clear line of vision (Khazindar 2010; Laidi-Hanieh 2009).

Sansour's "Land Confiscation Order 06/24/T" (2007), "a requiem for a small piece of land and a stone house" (artist's comment on her website, www.larissasansour.com, 2011), deals with the same theme. This ten-minute video film centres on a family summer house that belonged to the artists' grandparents, and the imaginative schemes dreamt up by her brother and sister to avoid its impending seizure by the Israeli military. At one point, they go silent and unfurl a huge roll of black cloth which they then proceed to drape all round the small house in a surreal funeral, a ritual acknowledgment of their loss at both a personal and collective level (Khazindar 2010, p.33).

Rula Halawani's "Negative Incursion" (2002) (fig.22) series of photographs captures the death and destruction of the conflict as it actually happens during Israel's March 2002 military invasion of West Bank towns. Her use of black and white negative prints serves to highlight the horror of these events in a hyperrealistic way, sharpening the viewer's perception of the terror and damage visited on ordinary people and evoking all the negativity and darkness that must have surrounded the witness-photographer as she was taking these shots (Marcoulesco 2003; Nasar 2003). "I was shocked; everything around me looked so different.....It was that night that my hopes for peace died" (Halawani 2003).

(Fig.20. Jabbour, Vacant Seats, 2000-1. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.21. Tamari, Tale of a Tree, 1999-2006. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.22. Halawani, Negative Incursion, 2002. Image has been removed.)

Palestinians: Everyday Living

In the diaspora, the life of the exile tends to be expressed in abstract, emotional terms, as in the work of Steve Sabella and Emily Jacir referred to in the Palestinian Homeland section above. But the practical implications are addressed too, as in Jacir's "Where We Come From" (2001-3), a comment on the disruption in the social fabric of Palestinian life created by the conditions of Israeli occupation and control. This project in text, photography and video, documents the artist's fulfilment of requests from over thirty Palestinians around the world without the same freedom of access to their own people as Jacir's American passport allows her. In response to her basic question "If I could do anything for you, anywhere in Palestine, what would it be?" she was charged with a variety of tasks, ranging from playing football with the first Palestinian boy she met in Haifa, to laying flowers on a mother's grave in Jerusalem. She duly set out to accomplish these to the best of her ability, and the records of her efforts form the bulk of this work. (Where We

Come From exhibition catalogue, Debs and Co. Gallery, New York, 2003; Demos 2003, pp.68-72; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art FAQ sheet on Where We Come From exhibit)

Similarly, the Palestinian refugee camps around the Arab world present problematic features of everyday living that have served as points of artistic focus. Hilal's video "Roofs: 'public-private' open spaces" (2008) shows how women of the Al Fawwar camp in Jordan have adapted to some of the limitations of their situation by recreating the traditional Arab family "hawsh" (courtyard) on the roof due to lack of open space at ground level in overcrowded conditions, and how the interconnection of adjacent roofs establishes a parallel world where women, children and the elderly can socialise (Khazindar 2010, pp.24-5). The theme of adaptation to circumstances also informs "How Beautiful is Panama!" (2008), an exhibition of the work of six young Palestinian photographers from Burj Al-Shamali camp in Lebanon which has been widely toured in camps in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. The title refers to a German children's tale, the moral of which is that an actual familiar location can, from a different perspective, turn out to be just as beautiful as any exotic land of dreams or fantasies, and the photographs feature camp landscapes, interiors and characters. (Eid-Sabbagh and Lourie 2009)

But the majority of Palestinian visual artists focus their work on the struggle involved in everyday living for the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza, and a major theme of such work is the sense of imprisonment, of being trapped in the situation there. The separation wall is a potent symbol of this restriction, and Halawani's series of photographs, "The Wall" (2004-5) (fig.23), captures its ugly, menacing bleakness and capacity to intimidate: "Like a huge monster, the wall consumes and devours everything under and around it.....transforming the environment into a landscape of fear, dissolution and imprisonment" (Halawani 2008, p.95). In a similar vein, Taysir Batniji, a native of Gaza now living and working in Paris, documents in his "Miradors" (2008) (fig.24) the archaeology of control inherent in the Israeli military watchtower installations which form a part of the daily landscape for Palestinians living in occupied territory. This series of 26 photographs is

essentially a typology of the watchtowers, consciously modelled on the work of the Belchers, who photographically documented German industrial buildings in the 1950s, but the risk involved in even attempting to photograph these Israeli miradors puts this work into a completely different category (Khazindar 2010, pp.10-11).

Saadeh's "Crossroads" (2003) (fig.25) is a photographic self-portrait of the artist standing with a suitcase at the door of her house, but unable to leave because of a large block of concrete encasing her left leg. Although this piece is partially a reference to gender issues imposing restrictions on women in Middle Eastern society, it also represents physical immobility as a result of the political obstructions placed on daily life by the Israeli occupation (Cestar 2010; Humphries 2008). The gap between "the dreams and aspirations of the individual Palestinian juxtaposed with the harsh reality they have to face" (from press release for Interior Landscape exhibition, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice, June, 2009) is also the theme of Hatoum's "Interior Landscape" (2008) (fig.26), a piece which features a steel bed with a barbed wire mattress support, and a pillow on it embroidered with the map of Palestine in human hair. The grid of the bed support ties in with Hatoum's recurrent motif of grids and cages, as exemplified by architectonic pieces like "Impenetrable" (2009) (an enormous barbed wire cube suspended from the ceiling on invisible threads) or "Cube" (2006) (essentially a large iron cage) and representing confinement and imprisonment (Mikdadi 2008; Spence 2009). The loss of freedom inherent in the Palestinian condition is also referenced in Bishara's "Kuffiyeh" (2009) (fig.27), a large representation of the chequered head-cloth traditional to Palestinian peasant garb, and famously adopted by Arafat to become a symbol of the PLO's armed struggle, made out of the plastic wire handcuffs used by the Israelis to bind prisoners.

Checkpoints are emblematic of the restrictions on Palestinian movement that are a feature of everyday life, and as such form the focal points of several iconic visual art works. Jacir's 130-minute video film "Crossing Surda: a record of going to and from work" (2002) is a surreptitious account of her daily commute from Ramallah to Birzeit university over the course of eight

days while she was working on her “Where We Come from” project referred to above. Despite her American passport, she got into trouble when she tried filming shots of her feet on her first Surda checkpoint crossing, and an Israeli soldier threatened her, threw her passport in the mud and confiscated her film. After that, she cut a hole in the bottom of a bag, put her camera in and continued filming through the hole in the bag. The resulting film documents the difficulties faced by Palestinians on a daily basis crossing Israeli checkpoints to get to and from their places of work (Bittar 2004; Demos 2003, p.76; Jacir 2009).

Halawani also features the checkpoint in her “Intimacy” series (2004) (fig.28), eighteen photographs of encounters at the Qalandia checkpoint, involving close-ups of the Israeli and Palestinian hands involved in the exchanges of papers and inspections of personal belongings. The irony of the title lies in the impersonal nature, yet the intrusiveness, of each routine interaction. What they all have in common, from the handing over of an ID card to the lifting of a shirt to expose an explosive-free midriff, is the inequality of the power relations: one set of hands is assertive, expansive and demanding, while the other remains reticent, self-controlled, waiting (Aperture 27,000 exhibition catalogue, Selma Feriani Gallery, London, 2009; Hammami 2008).

A dark humour informs Sharef Waked’s mordant response to the humiliation of the checkpoint experience in his video “Chic Point: Fashion for Israeli Checkpoints” (2003) (fig.29). Being an Israeli Palestinian, born in Nazareth, now living and working in Haifa, Waked’s work has not only represented Palestine in international exhibitions worldwide, but also plays in the Gallery of Israeli Modern Art at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem (October, 2010). His film shows a fast-paced succession of attractive, well-groomed young Palestinian men parading down a fashion catwalk, to a heavy, rhythmic, almost menacing background beat. They model a variety of outfits, but the viewer soon realises they all have one thing in common: a midriff that is bare, or that can be easily and conveniently exposed. These clothes are all designed “to preempt those daily and prevailing imperatives of Israeli soldiers, who order Palestinians to lift clothes and expose their flesh - the

hiding grounds for bombs – as they cross the intricate and expanding network of military checkpoints” (Khazindar 2010, p. 37).

(Fig.23. Halawani, The Wall, 2004-5. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.24. Batniji, Miradors, 2008. Image has been removed.)

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(Fig.25. Saadeh, Crossroads, 2003. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.26. Hatoum, Interior Landscape, 2008. Image has been removed.)

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(Fig.27. Bishara, Kuffiyeh, 2009. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.28. Halawani, Intimacy, 2004. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.29. Waked, Chic Point, 2003. Image has been removed.)

The everyday difficulties and frustrations faced by Palestinians, and the sense of entrapment inherent in their situation, affects the way in which the quality of time is experienced. There is the need for constant alertness and readiness for quick action when necessary, as referenced in Hawajri's video "Molokhiya" (2007-8) which, in capturing the speed and dexterity of his mother's hands cutting the herbs and ingredients for this typical Palestinian dish, reflects the adroitness necessary to a life shaped by danger (Khazindar 2010, p.23); or in Jerusalem-based Jumana Abboud's series of photographs, "Tables" (2006), referring to the light-weight portable objects used as tables by street vendors who need to be able to move in a hurry when the Israeli police make their rounds (Khazindar 2010, p.9).

But mostly, there is a sense of nothing happening, of time slowly passing with no essential change. This is evoked in Batniji's "Gaza Diary 02" video (2001-6), where the use of slow motion, the capture of different patterns of light and shade, and the constant background buzz of Israeli F16s flying overhead, all serve to create a melancholic atmosphere, a sense of being subdued and trapped, from a fourteen-minute series of views and scenes from everyday life (Khazindar 2010, p.11; /si:n/ Festival of Video Art and Performance catalogue, Jerusalem, 2009). It is also a feature of "Dahiet al Bareed, the District of the Post Office" (2002), a video work by Rosalind Nashashibi, a British Palestinian, which depicts a slow, hot afternoon in a district originally built, to her own architect grandfather's design, as a Utopian suburb of East Jerusalem for employees of the Palestine post office. This six-minute film of children playing football, young men hanging out at the local barber's, and people being called to prayer, conveys a sense of the melancholic, aimless drift of time, but also captures the tensions underlying the actions and attitudes of the young men (McKee 2003). "Nothing's happening at all, but there's always this sense something could happen" (artist's comment in interview with A. Mackay, Scotsman, April 26, 2003).

Hani Zurob, a Gaza-born painter, now Paris-based, treats the same theme in his "Standby" series (2008) (fig.30), originally envisaged as a project of sixty paintings, which "refers explicitly to the whole Palestinian people who have been placed under such a situation for nearly sixty years now" (artist's

comment of May, 2008, on www.hanizurob.com). These large, dark pictures are mainly executed in the medium of bitumen, a material used by the Israeli military to cover over razed and bulldozed buildings and roads in the occupied territories, as well as for the Israeli prison floors on which the artist had occasion to spend some nights. They depict male figures, all of whom seem to be stuck in their motion, yet who still - on standby - manage to exude "the pent-up energy one feels among young Palestinians" (Kluijver 2009).

The sense of waiting, and the psychological and physiological changes that take place with the passing of the years, is the theme of Gaza-born, now Bonn-based, Fawzy Emrany's installation "Skin and Years" (2007) (fig.31). In a small, white-walled room, the floor is entirely taken up with a close-up shot of the backs of someone's clasped hands, skin, pores and hairs all vastly magnified. In the background, a voice is slowly counting in Arabic, one of a number of refugees from camps in Jordan enumerating the years from their birth into the future, the years they have been waiting for some solution to their predicament. (Khazindar 2010, p.10)

(Fig.30. Zurob, Standby, 2008. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.31. Emrany, sketch for Skin and Years installation, 2007.

Image has been removed.)

Israel: Militarisation

A prevalent theme in the Israeli contemporary visual arts is the wholesale militarisation of Israeli society. Yael Bartana, Israeli-born, now Amsterdam-based, deals with military-related national ritual in her “Trembling Time” video (2001), which depicts the moment on Fallen Soldiers’ Day when the country stops and stands in silence in commemoration of those who have died in Israeli wars. She interrogates Israeli reality with this piece, posing the question of “whether these rituals strengthen the nation or whether they merely increase our loyalty to the state whilst at the same time undermining our ability to make an individual judgement” (Bartana 2002). Filmed from a bridge above the Ayalon highway, it shows cars stopping, people getting out, standing, then getting back in, all in slow motion and with fade effects, and to a background din of heavily amplified warning sirens and other ensuing noises (Cats 2010, pp.58-61; Goodman 2007, p.30). The seven minutes thus stretched from a one-minute silence present some eerie, ghost-like effects: Edelstein, in his introductory essay to Bartana’s “Short Memory” exhibition

(2009, p.28) compares the cars in the film to coffins from which the dead emerge.

Tel Aviv-based Adi Nes, who works largely with staged photography, asks a similar question in his "Soldiers" series (1994-2000), in which he examines and subverts Israeli military stereotypes through the motif of homoeroticism (Cats 2010, pp.126-7). He recreates an iconic photograph of victorious heroes of the Six Days' War, but with a sensually entangled, ethnically mixed male group (Untitled, 1999). He presents, in probably his best-known work (another Untitled, 1999) (fig.32), a tableau in the style of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper, but comprised of young Israeli soldiers at a routine mess meal, the figure in the central Christ position gazing pensively into the middle distance while his comrades-in-arms engage in erotically loaded fraternal camaraderie around the table. Not only is this piece a challenge to Israeli machismo, it is also, in its implication of this possibly being a last supper for these young men, a powerful political statement about sacrifice and betrayal (Bronner 2008; catalogue notes, Real Time: Art in Israel, 1998-2008 exhibition, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 2008).

Several artists touch on the theme of the reality of death for the younger generation in a society where military service in a seemingly never-ending conflict is universal. Nir Hod, Israeli-born now living in New York but still inspired by images from Israeli life and societal processes, focuses on the themes of beauty, youth and death in his paintings, all based on staged photographs. In "Lost Youth" (2002) (fig.33), working from a newspaper photograph, he depicts a scene at a military funeral, a group of young soldiers in mourning, infused with a physical perfection only found in film or advertising, viewed through the centre of a huge wreath of flowers which creates an explicit connection between the beauty of youth in bloom and death. (Atlan 2008, pp.36-41; Cats 2010, pp.72-3; Gal 2009, p.89) Ori Gersht approaches the same theme in a more abstract way in his "Pomegranate" (2006) (fig.34), a three-minute video set entirely on a grey window-sill, on which stand a gourd and a cut-up melon, with a lettuce and a pomegranate (one of the seven traditional native fruits and plants of the ancient land of Israel) hanging from strings above them, much in the style of a Dutch or

Spanish sixteenth or seventeenth century vanitas still-life painting. After a few seconds, a bullet enters the screen from the right-hand side and pierces the pomegranate, which bursts and sheds its blood-coloured juice and seeds over everything else, all in the slowest of slow motions, the whole piece evoking the experience of untimely, sudden and violent death. (Caputo 2009; Wecker 2009)

The pain caused by such untimely death for the mothers of fallen young soldiers provides another perspective on the lost youth theme. Eli Petel's Untitled diptych (2004) presents a painted collage, based on photographs from newspapers in the wake of violent events of the ongoing conflict, in which mothers, both Arab and Israeli, are expressing their pain in a variety of emotional gestures (Gal 2009, p.89). Erez Israeli, consistently preoccupied with images of mourning and commemoration, has two video works referencing the pain of mothers by way of the Christian image of the Pieta. In "God Full of Mercy" (2004) (fig.35), a mother is attempting to hold up the body of her dead son in an allusion to Michelangelo's Pieta sculpture, but this flesh and blood mother lacks the superhuman strength required to support him, and is unable to accept his death with the same quiet serenity as Mary, who was certain of his resurrection. With the Jewish prayer for the souls of the deceased playing slowly in the background, the body slips from her grasp time and time again as she struggles to hold on to him (Israeli 2006). In Untitled (2006), the artist's mother, sitting on the front step of her house with her son's body lying across her lap, is plucking feathers which have been stuck on to his body with wax. This act, alluding both to the myth of Icarus and to the Sacrifice of Isaac, seems to indicate she accepts his death, but still cannot bear to part with his body (Mixed Emotions exhibition catalogue, Haifa Museum of Art, 2006).

Although Israel's militarisation has been a constant artistic theme over the better part of the last twenty years, the focus during the 1990s tended to be on the extent to which the militarised state controls and defines the individual. Pinchas Cohen Gan, a Moroccan-born Tel Aviv-based mixed-media artist, in his "Art is Service" series (1995) uses Israeli Defence Force uniforms as a neutral base for comment and decoration, implying their status as a canvas

for life in Israel (Katz-Freiman 1996). Meir Gal presents “Six Hundred and Seventy Two Centimeters of War Decorations” (1995), four long horizontal boards covered in coloured fabrics to represent blown-up versions of the ribbons awarded as military decorations, with individual ribbons often elongated to cover more than one war given Israel’s numerous conflicts, enlarged to the dimensions of his own body (Glueck 1997).

But with the new millennium, there is a greater emphasis on Israel’s defensive and militaristic stance as the source of self-inflicted damage. In Sigalit Landau’s two-minute video, “Barbed Hula” (2000) (fig.36), the artist’s naked trunk, against a background of the Mediterranean shoreline at sunrise, gyrates within a hula hoop made of barbed wire, the barbs, though pointing outwards, leaving visible marks on the flesh. This piece has obvious religious and feminist references, but can also be seen as alluding to borders and to the violently protected cultural demarcation line between Israel and Palestine, particularly by contrast to the natural border of the sea which forms a backdrop to the painful dance. (Cone 2007; Desanges 2010; Rabina 2005; Soulez 2010) Erez Israeli, in his “Untitled” video (2003) (fig.37), sews red gerberas, the official flower for Israeli Defence Force funeral wreaths, onto the skin of his chest, and then with a force verging on violence rips off their petals and stamens (catalogue notes for BoysCraft exhibition, Haifa Museum of Art, 2008). Hila Lulu Lin’s “Ein Gabot” video (2004), shown within the frame of an open bathroom cabinet, is of a woman silently shaving off both of her eyebrows, an act of self-mutilation carried out over twenty minutes of complete silence and concentration. The fact that the title of the piece is misspelled in Hebrew to resemble the name of an Arab town rather than directly referring to ‘no eyebrows’ gives it an obvious allusion to the wiping of Arab communities off the map, whether semantically or physically. The act comes over as essentially a shameful self-defacement and one in which the viewer becomes mutely compliant. (Hazan 2004)

Moving away from the personal body to the body of the nation, Miki Kratsman’s iconic “Abu Dis” photograph (2003) (fig.38), shows, from the Palestinian side, a section of the separation wall in which its monumental dimensions are emphasised, and on which someone has graffiti-sprayed in

red paint the words “Abu Dis Ghetto”. This allusion to the methods of the Third Reich echoes both Palestinian reproach for and global condemnation of Israeli actions, serving to make this piece a mordant comment on the self-destructive nature of Israel’s policies and actions. (Atlan 2008, pp.53, 58-9)

(Fig.32. Nes, Untitled, 1999. Image has been removed.)

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(Fig.33. Hod, Lost Youth, 2002. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.34. Gersht, Pomegranate, 2006. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.35. Israeli, God Full of Mercy, 2004. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.36. Landau, Barbed Hula, 2000. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.37. Israeli, Untitled, 2003. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.38. Kratsman, Abu Dis, 2003. Image has been removed.)

Israel: An Unfair Society

From the 1970s, art has been used as a channel for protest about inequality and discrimination within Israeli society. Pinchas Cohen Gan gave an artistic voice to the Mizrahim, the Jews from Arab countries who felt like second-class citizens in Israel, holding his first one-man show in 1972 in a kibbutz cow-shed, with the implication that the indifferent gaze of the cattle was as good a reception as a Moroccan-born Jew like himself could expect in a society dominated by the European Ashkenazim (Aviv 2010, p.34; Stiles 1996, p.586). The point was still being made in the 1990s, as demonstrated by Meir Gal's iconic photograph "Nine Out of Four Hundred (The West and the Rest)" (1996) (fig.39). This shows the artist holding an Israeli history textbook in one hand by a few thin pages, while the covers and the large amount of other pages are left hanging down. His point is that of a four hundred page official history of Israel, only nine pages, the ones he is holding the book by, have been devoted to the Jews from Arab countries: this is clear evidence of ethnic discrimination, of how "the State of Israel continues to minoritise its non-European majority" (Gal 1997).

The 1990s saw some improvement in the citizenship status and political power of the Mizrahim, and they were even offered an apology by Ehud Barak prior to the 1999 elections for the “mistakes” made in their treatment by the governments of the 1950s and 1960s (Shafir and Peled 2002, p.347). Nevertheless, social inequality in Israeli society was still rife, and, although Vinitzky-Seroussi (2008) characterises the subsequent decade in Israel, 1998-2008, as one of indifference, marked by boredom and social apathy, and a blasé attitude towards the disadvantaged and the victimised, Israeli artists have continued to comment on perceived injustice and discrimination within their society. Jan Tichy, an Israeli artist of Czech origin now based in Chicago, presented his “Cage” installation (2002), in which three Israelis of Ethiopian origin, falashas, were locked up in a steel cage on a downtown Jerusalem street, in order to bring racism out into the open (Edelstein 2010). Israeli kibbutz-born, now New York-based Ohad Meromi’s “The Boy from South Tel Aviv” (2001) (fig.40) fulfils a similar function. This huge statue of a naked and beautiful adolescent African boy, which now stands in the Upper Entrance Hall of the Contemporary Art Gallery of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, is a colossus made of styrofoam and black-painted paper. South Tel Aviv being a poor suburb of the city where the immigrant labour force lives, the piece directly addresses the dissonance between the poverty of these workers and the comfortable, middle-class surroundings of visitors to museums and art galleries. The first time it was exhibited, in the Helena Rubinstein Gallery in uptown Tel Aviv, it was behind a border-crossing barrier-type structure, underscoring the boy’s illegal presence in Israel, and implying a contrast with the state’s earlier egalitarian years. (Bronner 2008; Mendelsohn 2008, p.85)

Adi Nes also draws unfavourable comparisons between the socialistic ideology on which the state of Israel was built and the widening social gaps which characterise contemporary Israeli society in his “Biblical Stories” series (2003-2006), which takes economic inequality as its theme. These fourteen staged photographs, carefully crafted tableaux of down-and-out characters which use neighbourhood acquaintances as the actors, are set in marginal areas of Tel Aviv where the rifts in the social fabric are glaringly obvious, and

refer in their titles to biblical characters who once embodied the ethos of national renewal for Zionist settlers in the land of Israel. They include an Abraham and Isaac represented by a scruffy old homeless man pushing along a shopping trolley full of empty plastic bottles on top of which a boy is sleeping (fig.41); a naked, drunken Noah lying on the ground in front of a video rental machine; and a Jacob and Esau sat in a soup-kitchen, engaged in an altercation over a plate of food (fig.42). The series, focussing on biblical heroes at the lowest points in their lives, deals with the issue of Israeli identity at a point when Vinitzky-Seroussi's "piggish capitalism" (2008, p.68) appears to have undermined any sense or ideal of social solidarity. (Cats 2010, pp.128-31; Gilerman 2007; Horrigan 2008; Lagnado 2007)

In her explanation of the Jacob and Esau scene in the catalogue accompanying Nes's Biblical Stories exhibition at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art in 2007, Shevlowe states that Nes's perception views "even the soup kitchen, where everyone is wanting, as pervaded by an atmosphere of deceit and manipulation". This theme of deception, already referred to in the context of the landscape above, is addressed in some of Jan Tichy's work, where he focuses on exposing and literally bringing to light charged structures of political power in Israel. His "Dimona" (2006) is a scaled model of Israel's nuclear reactor in the Negev desert, installed in a dark room with a narrow beam of light slowly passing over it. Since it was built in 1956, the purpose of this structure has been obscured and kept vague by the authorities. In a similar vein, his "1391" (2007) (fig.43) is an architectural paper model of facility 1391, "Israel's Guantanamo", with a light source casting realistic shadows on and around the structure. The existence of this detention camp for political prisoners has never been officially acknowledged. With both installations, viewers are invited to take home printout do-it-yourself kits of the models, and make one themselves, thus becoming complicit in bringing the structures into the open. (Edelstein 2010; Trainor 2010)

(Fig.39. Gal, Nine out of Four Hundred (The West and the Rest), 1996.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.40. Meromi, The Boy from South Tel Aviv, 2001.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.41. Nes, Untitled (Abraham and Isaac), 2005.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.42. Nes, Untitled (Jacob and Esau), 2006.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.43. Tichy, 1391, 2007. Image has been removed.)

The Dream

While Palestinian artists have made art out of adversity, using creativity to resist and protest their situation, the picture they paint is not without hope. The perseverance they portray, the Palestinian *sumud* (steadfastness) in the face of the trials and tribulations of everyday life, rests on an underlying belief, albeit held with varying degrees of conviction, that current circumstances are temporary and bound to change given time. This permits the occasional indulgence in dreams of a normal life, especially for their children, and in aspirations to citizenship of a Palestinian state that could provide them with an opportunity for normal living.

The work of the Israeli visual artists does not seem to be imbued with such hope. They seem preoccupied rather with the loss of a dream, with the disconnect between the original vision of the Jewish State and the realities of contemporary Israel, a society rife with inequality and in a constant state of military conflict. Faced with these realities, the tendency is towards either doomsday visions of a nightmarish apocalyptic world seen as an inevitable consequence of the direction Israel is taking; or escapism into ethereal, otherworldly fantasies and philosophical musings which are completely removed from the actualities of everyday Israeli life.

Palestine: Hopes and aspirations

Many of the works referred to in the preceding sections of this chapter underscore the enduring nature of both the land and the people of Palestine. The title piece of the first major international exhibition of Palestinian art to tour overseas in the early 2000s, *Made in Palestine*, was Israeli Palestinian Ashraf Fawakhry's "I am Donkey/Made in Palestine" (1998-ongoing) (fig.44). A series of 48 rubber stamps on wood blocks shows the donkey, a symbol of obstinacy and toughness for the Palestinians, in many different shapes and forms, in a variety of situations and adorned with various motifs in different materials. This witty piece encapsulates the philosophy of *sumud*, underlining the persistence and resilience of the Palestinians, and embodying a dogged and determined confidence in their capacity to endure (Kerschen 2003; Marcoulesco 2003; Mikdadi-Nashashibi 2003).

And where life endures, hope exists. Suleiman Mansour's dry, cracked figures could be revived, like Ishmael in the desert, with life-giving water (Mikdadi-Nashashibi 2003); a way through Mona Hatoum's "Impenetrable" barbed wire cube becomes apparent if the piece is viewed from certain angles (Soueif 2009); and Tamari's destroyed olive trees will always grow back again in the Palestinian soil (Harithas 2003; Mikdadi-Nashashibi 2003). Suleiman Mansour's well-known painting on the separation wall of the hands of Adam and God (fig.45), in the style of Michelangelo's famous central image for the Sistine Chapel ceiling, has the hands metres apart, rather than the inch of the original, indicating the chasm dividing Israelis and Palestinians (Hirschfield 2006; Mansour 2008). But the hands are still reaching out to each other, regardless of the distance between them. These artistic depictions of obstacles and difficulties still retain a modicum of hope, the glimpsed possibility of a way through to normality.

This possibility is also recognised in a couple of works which focus particularly on the lives of Palestinian children. Rana Bishara's widely exhibited installation, "Homage to Childhood" (2003-ongoing) (fig.46), refers to notions of what childhood should be as well as to the realities of life for children in the occupied territories. A child's bed with a white fluffy cover sits

in the middle of a white-walled room suffused with a rosy light. The floor space is entirely taken up with translucent white balloons, each one containing a photograph of a Palestinian child undergoing some form of abuse or hardship associated with the conflict. Suspended from the ceiling are a number of pieces of white tulle netting, a material typically used to hang over and tuck in round a child's bed at night, all edged with barbed wire. A traditional lullaby plays softly in the background. The juxtaposition of images of protection with images of danger in this richly symbolic piece underscores the contrast between the normal childhood that everyone wants for their children and Palestinian childhood (Khazindar 2010, p.13; Kluijver 2009).

In a similar vein, Hawajri's "Children of Fire" video (2006-7), which shows children in the Gaza strip, a conflict area, going out to play with flares at night, draws a poignant contrast between the normal childhood laughter and creativity of their play as they create beautiful patterns in the air with the flares, and the tension, uncertainty and danger of their surroundings (Khazindar 2010, p.23).

But it is perhaps Ramallah-based conceptual artist Khalil Rabah who best expresses the collective Palestinian desire for normality in his artistic realisation of an alternative universe in which Palestine is a normal state, complete with all the institutions expected thereof. His "London Office of the United States of Palestine Airlines" installation (2007) (fig.47) is an empty, silent, airline office. The model plane fronting it boasts a "United States of Palestine Airlines" logo composed of individual letters taken from a variety of different world airlines. The map on the wall, with its far-reaching mesh of pointers, signifies an open world of possibilities, but the clocks on the wall indicating the various international time zones have all stopped, frozen in time. (Kluijver 2009) Rabah's other projects along the same lines are his nomadic and ongoing "Palestinian Museum of Natural History and Humankind" (catalogue notes for Liverpool Biennial International 08 Exhibition; Craddock 2007, 2009) and his "United States of Palestine Times" (2008). (Fadda 2009) While evoking a sense of loss for what might have been had Palestine's national development not been halted in 1948, these

pieces equally communicate an aspiration for what yet might be: they are “at once an absurd satire and a sincere plea” (Brown 2010).

(Fig.44. Fawakhry, I am Donkey/ Made in Palestine, 1998-ongoing.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.45. Mansour, painting on the separation wall near Ramallah,

(now print only). Image has been removed.)

(Fig.46. Bishara, Homage to Childhood, 2003-ongoing.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.47. Rabah, London Office of the United States of Palestine Airlines,
2007. Image has been removed.)

Israel: Nightmares and Fantasies

Vinitzky-Seroussi (2008, p.72) characterises Israel's first decade of the twenty first century as "times without dreams or aspirations". The brief survey of the visual arts of the period outlined above, however, indicates something more than mere absence of dreams: it reveals an active disillusionment, the undermining of national myths, the loss of the dream, the vision that was Israel. Shai Kremer titled one of his exhibitions of Infected Landscapes photographs "Israel: Broken Promised Land" (2008, Julie Saul Gallery, New York; Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco), and the Israeli contemporary visual arts world has documented not only the promises broken in the visual landscape but those broken in society as well.

The debunking of the Zionist pioneer narrative of the new Jew is seen in the work of Adi Nes and Nir Hod above, and in pieces like Erez Israeli's "The Young Guard" (2006), a joke figure on a child-sized horse, set on a cardboard box podium, with a stuffed sparrow on his head, in ironic dialogue with the traditional horse-rider memorial statues to Zionist heroes (Cats 2010, pp.78-81). The mordant comment of Gal, Nes, Meromi, and Tichy compares current social reality with the original Zionist socialist vision and finds it wanting. The perceptions of a stained and spoiled landscape are captured by Kremer, Weinstein and Reeb, and in pieces like Jan Tichy's "Bats" (2007), a "paean to the somewhat tarnished aspirations of the ideal dream city" (Trainor 2010) in a series of eighty slides showing how the large colonies of bats which live beneath the Dizengoff Centre in Tel Aviv come out at night and splatter their dark-staining guano all over the white walls of the modernist utopian 1930s Bauhaus-inspired area of the city.

Instead of dreams, artists depict nightmares. London-born, now Tel Aviv-based, video artist Doron Solomons' "Hora" (2008) is an eleven-minute film which intercuts blurred and digitally manipulated images of a group performing this traditional Israeli folk dance, originally from Eastern Europe, with symbols and images from military, political and everyday Israeli life. Its "embarrassing and scary demonstration of aggression" (Dorons, cited in Cats 2010, p.157) expresses apocalyptic fears about the future of Israel. Eliezer

Sonnenschein's large-scale painting "Landscape and Jerusalem" (2007) (fig.48), executed in a style which combines images from medieval and renaissance doomsday visions with those of late twentieth century comic-books and advertising, mixes the grotesque, the surreal and the sexual in a nightmarish vision of looming catastrophe (Gal 2009, p.88; Mendelsohn 2008, p.79). Tel Aviv-based multi-media artist Gil Marco Shani's installation "Safari" (2002) features a building, which could be either a school or a hotel, set in an artificial forest, with beds in one of the rooms where visitors are invited to lie down and flip through booklets of various images. These are largely homosexual erotica and pictures of dead, featherless, baby parrots, indicating barren, infertile couplings (Ginton 2002), and the whole piece is considered as comment on "an idealistic culture with utopian aspirations that has collapsed into a world of empty convention rife with concealed barbarity and immorality" (Mendelsohn 2008, p.85).

Sigalit Landau's papier-mache installation "The Country" (2002) (fig.49), in its depiction of the orchard from hell, with its blackened, misshapen fruit, made from rolled-up sheets of the Haaretz newspaper containing accounts of the most recent events and atrocities of the conflict, and its skeletal, tortured figures frozen in the act of picking, transporting and counting this toxic produce, is a powerfully bleak distortion of the idyllic orchard images of early Zionist paintings (Levine 2006, p.35; Mendelsohn 2008, p.78). Weinstein's installation "Slope" (2007-8) (fig.50) shows a few red-tiled roofs, typical of Israeli houses outside the major cities, sticking up out of an enormous pile of dark soot, suggestive of the fall-out after a Pompei-like volcanic disaster, and representing the failure and submergence of the Israeli utopian dream in the Mediterranean environment (catalogue notes from Real Time: Art in Israel, 1998-2008 exhibition, Israel Museum, Jerusalem, 2008; Gal 2009, p.83).

South African-born, now Jerusalem-based painter Larry Abramson introduces into his work from about 2008, particularly in the Yechiam (2008-9) and Panic (2009-10) series, two distinct motifs symbolic of impending doom (fig.51). The bunch of grapes, signifying arcadian abundance and fruitful promise as brought back by the spies sent by Moses to reconnoitre the promised land (Numbers 13:21-25), is depicted in various stages of

decay or damage by insects. Prominent among these threatening insects, and also featuring in a variety of contexts other than grape clumps in Abramson's work, is the hornet, that panic-inducing instrument of God from the Book of Joshua (24:12-13): "And I sent the hornet before you which drove them out before you but not with thy sword, nor with thy bow. And I have given you a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them; of the vineyards and oliveyards which ye planted not do ye eat". (personal conversation with Larry Abramson, 12 October, 2010, Jerusalem; Ankori 2010, pp.394-5).

The alternative to such doomsday scenarios is escapism. Miri Segal, a Tel-Aviv based video artist, chooses the virtual world for her ultimately futile escape from Israeli reality. Her 28-minute film "BRB" (2007) (the common internet abbreviation for "Be right back") documents the artist's journey into the Second Life website, its imaginary world disintegrating at the end of the film when the camera she is using enters the body of her Second Life avatar-self and reveals the emptiness inside (Mendelsohn 2008). Meanwhile, Avraham Pessó's painted landscapes stick to Israel. But whether urban, as in "Variation" (2008), a meticulously detailed depiction of Tel Aviv as reflected in the windows of a circular high-rise building, or rural, as in "Eliot Path" (2005), a recreation of the scenery of the hills around Jerusalem executed in painstaking detail, they are purely imaginary creations, if hauntingly familiar to Israelis. They are "free of politics, free of Zionism" (Cats 2010, p135), and completely free of people.

Sasportas' more recent work is also characterised by meticulously detailed portrayals of nature. Her "Guardians of the Threshold" installation (fig.52), exhibited at the 2007 Venice Biennale, reveals in its elaborate depiction of forests, caves and marshland her preoccupation with mysterious natural landscapes, especially in juxtaposition to architecture, and the obvious Japanese influence on their rendition reflects the artist's desire to achieve some distancing from the realities of Israeli life (Lapidot 2006; Mendelsohn 2008, p. 82). Her work is increasingly focussed on the "illusion of reality", on the relationship between the conscious and sub-conscious mind, and on the "intricate interconnectedness among everything" (Scrima 2006) in a

philosophical, almost mystical sense (Klein 2006, p.47). A similarly philosophical approach, disregarding the specificities of the here and now to take an overview of humanity in the context of the cyclical patterns of time, informs Sigalit Landau's "DeadSee" (2005) (fig.53), a wall-sized video projection of the slow uncoiling of a spiral of five hundred strung-together watermelons in the Dead Sea, the naked artist floating stretched out in their midst, until the whole thing completely unravels and disappears, as if it never was (Cats 2010, pp.114-7); and Michal Rovner's "Data Zone" (2003) (fig.54), in which a row of laboratory Petri dishes, normally used for bacterial culture, are employed as video screens onto which are projected films of masses of tiny human figures engaged in constant movement, "intimately intertwined and rhythmically pulsating according to a pattern larger than that of the individual" (Coulter-Smith 2007). (Catalogue for Particles of Reality exhibition, Montreal, 2009)

(Fig.48. Sonnenschein, Landscape and Jerusalem, 2007.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.49. Landau, from The Country, 2002. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.50. Weinstein, Slope, 2007- 8. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.51. Abramson, Yechiam B XXX, 2008-9. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.52. Sasportas, Guardians of the Threshold, 2007.

Image has been removed.)

(Fig.53. Landau, Deadsee, 2005. Image has been removed.)

(Fig.54. Rovner, from Data Zone, Culture Plate 4, 2003.

Image has been removed.)

Summary

The Palestinian art work surveyed above would seem to reflect many of the elements of the grief pattern discernible in post-1948 Palestinian history. There is a clear focus on the loss of the Palestinian homeland and on the many other subsequent losses contingent on that original one. Diaspora artists, living mainly in North America or Europe, such as Hatoum, Jacir and Sansour, tend to express that loss in more generalised or abstract terms, with direct reference to the historic nakba of 1948, to the rupture of the social fabric of a fragmented people and to the emotional impact on identity created by lack of an accessible homeland. Artists still living on the land, or who at least have spent a greater part of their lives there before moving away, such as Batniji, Bishara, Halawani, Hawajri and Waked, centre their attention more on the ways in which the losses consequent on the original loss of homeland now affect aspects of everyday life for Palestinians. The loss of freedom of movement, the loss of expectations of a normal life for themselves or their children, the loss of the opportunity for citizenship of their own recognised state, are dominant themes.

Although the Palestinians may have lost ownership and control of their land, they have not lost their connection with it. Mansour's mud and Bishara's cacti demonstrate a strong, organic, blood-and-soil type bond between the Palestinians and their land, and the physical landscape is shown as having suffered in the same way as its people since the nakba of 1948, spoiled and damaged by Israeli development and militarisation. This sense of connection informs the "paradise lost" theme, seen in some of the work of Halaby, Halawani, Sansour and Shoman, amongst others, and elaborated upon in chapter four as one of the collective strategies employed by the Palestinian people for making some sense of their post-nakba world.

"Armed struggle" was another strategy apparent in the historical evidence, but this is not a major theme of the contemporary Palestinian visual arts, although the potential for it can be discerned in the sense of pent-up tension of Zurob's "Standby" figures, or in Batniji's and Nashashibi's films of everyday

life in Gaza and East Jerusalem. More to the fore is “sumud”, the attitude of steadfastness and perseverance which is displayed in so much of the work described above, depicting Palestinians going about their business with patience, and often humour, despite the difficulties, frustrations and obstacles of everyday living.

They persist, but they cannot move forward. The perception of a people trapped, blocked, in both space and time, pervades the canon of their visual arts work. Checkpoints, barbed wire, gigantic walls, watchtowers, military power and control dominate the physical scene; anxious, nervous haste and long, melancholic passages of slow-moving time where nothing at all changes, characterise the temporal landscape. The Palestinians can entertain wistful dreams of normal life for their children and themselves, as citizens of a normal state, but, for now, they are impeded from making progress towards these. Their art accords with their history: they are stuck right where they are.

The Israeli work also reveals a focus on loss, the loss of the dream, the vision that was the State of Israel. The “safe haven” for Jews is depicted as a dangerously militarised society in a perpetual state of conflict which exposes the nation’s youth to violent and untimely death. Moreover, the socialist and egalitarian principles which informed the early days of the Zionist project appear to be all but forgotten in a contemporary society portrayed as rife with discrimination, racism, and economic inequities. Many of the artists referred to above are engaged in a wholesale debunking of what they perceive as the myths on which the State of Israel was built, or in forcefully drawing attention to how far the reality of contemporary Israeli society has strayed from the original vision.

Nor is the relationship between the people of Israel and their physical environment portrayed as a happy one. There is certainly no organic connection here. The landscape is perceived as ugly and damaged by military activity, or its features are depicted as ethereal and vaguely unreal, as borrowed and not really belonging to the Israeli people. A few artists, like Aloni and Israeli, even hint that a European landscape is more suggestive of

“home” for many Israelis, while others like Rovner and Sasportas touch on existential homelessness, a theme of particular relevance to the Jewish religion and the archetype of the wandering Jew.

The canon of contemporary Israeli visual art reveals a bitter disillusionment with the State of Israel, and no real strategy for coming to terms with this loss bar the doomsday pronouncements of apocalyptic visions, or escapism into imaginative fantasy worlds or the higher reaches of philosophical and metaphysical thought. There is a sense of going round in circles, getting nowhere. Vinitzky-Seroussi (2008) suggests that Israeli apathy in the first decade of the twenty-first century can partly be attributed to a repetitiveness of events, a seen-it-all-before-ness more characteristic of cyclical than linear time. Solomons’ “Hora” dance, Landau’s “DeadSee” spiral, and Rovner’s patterns of movement in her “Data Zone” Petri dishes, all seem to refer to exactly this phenomenon.

And where does the holocaust and its attendant losses figure in the contemporary Israeli visual arts scene? Not very large, would seem to be the answer. Heller (2006, p.64) underlines its “sparse treatment in Israeli art”, and notes how the subject has been dealt with largely at international exhibitions outside Israel and then only since the 1990s. Within Israel, from the turn of the millenium, a few works have been produced that refer directly to the holocaust. Roee Rosen’s text and image installation “Live and Die as Eva Braun” (1997) attempts to inhabit Hitler’s mistress on her last day on earth, humanising both her and Hitler. Boaz Arad’s video “Hebrew Lessons” (2000) cleverly manipulates authentic audio documents to present Hitler, in typical animated speech-giving mode, apologising to the Jewish people in Hebrew (Hazan 2004). In her 2002 “Collectio Judaica” exhibition (Rosenfeld Gallery, Tel Aviv), Zoya Cherkassky presents a piece of jewellery featuring the yellow star in its design (Mendelsohn 2008, pp.82-3). Yael Bartana’s video “Mary Koszmary” (2007) features the exhortations of a radical Polish politician, in the language of the propaganda films of the 1930s, for three million Jews to return to Poland (Mytkowska 2008). And Erez Israeli’s “My eBay Collection” (2009) is a display of holocaust memorabilia purchased on ebay along with certificates confirming their authenticity, underscoring the

commodification and desacralisation of the holocaust (Shelf Life exhibition catalogue, Haifa Museum of Art, 2010).

In addition, some pieces, though not obviously referencing the holocaust, are open to holocaust-linked interpretations, for example: Ori Gersht's "The Forest" video (2006), where the falling trees can be seen as holocaust victims (Wecker 2009); Landau's "DeadSee" video (2005), in which the unravelling and disappearance of the spiral can be taken as a reference to the holocaust trauma of the artist's parents' generation (Cats 2010, pp.114-7); or Orit Raff's "Insatiable" series of photographs (2001-4) from an Israeli bakery, containing images redolent with holocaust associations (Goodman 2007, p.37).

There would seem to be two main reasons for this relative dearth of holocaust-related art. Firstly, public sensitivity over many years dictated that art dealing with the holocaust belonged exclusively to the "survivors" and the domain of Yad Vashem, the national memorial museum to the holocaust. The durability of this sensitivity was demonstrated by the controversy surrounding Rosen's 1997 Eva Braun installation at the Israel Museum and resulting in its being closed down. Secondly, holocaust-related art was perceived as part of diaspora Jewishness, and Israeli artists were more concerned with Israeliness and the need to normalise their art to international standards. From the late 1970s a few artists began to approach the topic, but those who focused their work on holocaust themes never really belonged to the artistic mainstream. (Heller 2006; Katz-Freiman 2003)

As discussed in chapter five, the holocaust is a central totem of the Jewish State, the event on which Israel is built. However, it does not figure large in the canon of the contemporary Israeli visual arts, which point rather to another, newer loss competing for attention: the loss of the dream that was Israel, the vision that was itself a response to the losses of the holocaust and a way of making sense of the post-holocaust Jewish world. In grief terms, this might be interpreted as a sign of the desire to move on and adapt to current realities. For the artists are displaying a concern with the problems of Israeli society as it is now, and are challenging the status quo which they perceive

as having given rise to these problems. This status quo can itself be seen as a collective grieving for the losses suffered in the holocaust, pathological in Freud's (1917/1961) terms in that the internalised image of the old doomed European Jew has collectively fused with that of the Israeli survivor to the extent that the latter tends to see the world through the attitudes, fears and insecurities of the former. The artists whose work is surveyed above are seeking to provide a different viewpoint, and in so doing their work might be regarded as contributing to the tension between hanging on to the past and moving on into a future based on a realistic appreciation of the present that is at the heart of the grief experience.

The fact that this alternative viewpoint is itself focussed on loss might, of course, be interpreted negatively as fitting in with an ongoing cycle of complicated grief, maladjustment and persistent loss. But perhaps the important point to be noted is that the art work underscores an authentically Israeli loss in terms of disillusionment with the Zionist dream, as opposed to Israel's dominant national focus on the essentially European Jewish loss associated with the holocaust.

7. NATIONS AND GRIEF

“The only constant is change.”

Heraclites

The primary aim of this final chapter is to draw together the threads of the six preceding ones and to examine what conclusions about national grief can be arrived at on the basis of the Palestinian and Israeli case studies. The main findings from grief theory’s interrogation of the historical trajectories of both peoples over the course of the twentieth century, along with the insights on current early twenty-first century Palestinian and Israeli identity provided by their respective canons of contemporary visual art, are summarised in order to furnish an answer to the basic research question of whether nations grieve, whether the pattern of behaviour they exhibit in the wake of loss could be said to constitute grief.

As well as summing up the conclusions to the study, this chapter also provides an assessment of its overall strengths and weaknesses as a piece of research, in addition to offering suggestions for further directions that similar or linked investigative inquiries might take. Finally, the chapter closes with a series of reflections on what this study’s grief theory perspective can tell us about nations, and on what its application at a large-scale collective level would seem to reveal about grief.

National Grief

Evidence for the operation of grief at a national level in the cases of both the Israeli and Palestinian peoples has been sought from two main sources. Firstly, an examination was made of the histories of the Palestinians and of the European Jews, subsequently the Israelis, surrounding and consequent on events which can be deemed to have inflicted significant damage on their respective collective identities, namely, the nakba of 1948 in which the Palestinians lost their land to the creation of Israel; and the holocaust of the

second world war years which resulted in the annihilation of the vast majority of European Jewry. Secondly, on the basis of history's essential link with identity, the contours of current national identity, as defined and presented in the contemporary visual arts canons of both peoples, were explored with a view to how they might accord or not with the patterns emerging from these histories.

Accepting that both the Palestinians and European Jewry in the earlier part of the twentieth century merit collective status as peoples enjoying a degree of unity, albeit attributable to completely different factors in each case, their histories from then on do appear to fit into the basic pattern associated with the trajectory of loss and subsequent reaction outlined in grief theory. For both peoples, a shared loss with substantially damaging impact on collective identity is immediately followed by a period of bewildered disorientation and emotional confusion, and then by attempts to repair and recreate the shattered collective identity and to pick up the broken threads of an ongoing collective narrative in the light of the changed circumstances of the post-loss world. The Palestinians appear to have made some accommodation over time with the realities of their post-nakba situation, but are blocked from moving forward on their path towards a normal level of functioning as a nation by forces largely outwith their control and resulting from long-term disenfranchisement of their grief by influential powers in the international community. Israel presents a more complicated picture. Its original *raison d'être* was as a way of making sense of European Jewry's post-holocaust world by providing an independent safe haven and homeland for all Jews that could take its rightful place within the community of nations, but things have not turned out quite as originally envisaged. Israel also seems to be impeded on its progress along any grief trajectory towards normalisation as a nation, for reasons partly of its own making and partly of the self-interest practised by various world powers whose support would appear to have served not so much to aid Israel's adjustment to, as to stifle its capacity for accommodation with, changing realities.

The evidence on current national identities, sourced from the contemporary visual arts, would seem to largely support these findings. Palestinian art is

preoccupied with loss, the original loss of homeland, and the losses of the social fabric and of everyday normal freedoms resulting directly from that. But the aspirations for a state of their own and the opportunity to live a normal life shine through. Israeli art deals with loss of a different kind, the loss of the vision that was Israel. Disillusionment with a militarised state in a permanent conflict situation and with a society rife with discrimination and inequity is the predominant theme, and no real way out of the dilemma is identified. The holocaust may loom large in Israeli state ritual and symbolism, but the evidence from the art works points to cross-currents in Israeli society attempting to focus attention on the problems of the here and now. If the contemporary visual artists of both nations are viewed as providers of sites for negotiation in which various elements of the status quo are up for questioning, then the Palestinians can be regarded as challenging an international status quo which has long kept them in an anomalous and unjust position of statelessness and occupation, while the Israelis are challenging the status quo of their own society which, in its preoccupation with the horrors of a European Jewish past, seems blind to the realities of its own Near Eastern Israeli present.

Palestine

Much has been made of whether the Palestinians could be regarded as a nation before 1948, as a collective with sufficient unity to register the events of that year as a shared, common loss, and the arguments are dealt with in some detail in chapter four above (pp.112-8). But Palestinian artists have highlighted what most historians and commentators appear to have missed, or at least underplayed: the importance of territory as a basis for collectivity. Their representations of the organic, blood-and-soil relationship between the Palestinian people and the land they lived on for centuries underscore the life-sustaining and life-ordering significance of physical space and its function as a locus for collective consciousness (Grosby 1995).

To lose that space, as the Palestinians did in 1948, is to lose the underpinnings of social existence: it is a mode of dispossession fundamental

to the collective sense of identity of the people who have been living in it. Such a loss fits with Marris's (1974, p.32) definition of bereavement as a "loss of self", a shattering of identity, a disruption of continuity and invalidation of purposes learned and consolidated not through just, as for the bereaved individual, a lifetime's experience, but in the case of a bereft people, generations of experience. The grief-triggering events of the nakba also fit with definitions of traumatic loss (pp. 26-9 above), in that the Palestinians had no frame of reference for it. As outlined above (pp. 120-4), they had fled from problems and conflicts in their land before, but there had never been any question of their being permanently separated from it. The Israeli ban on their return this time was something completely new in their experience.

The trajectory consequent on this traumatic loss would appear to follow a fairly normal pattern in grief theory terms. There was the initial period of disorientation, characterised by bewilderment, silence, and the practical distractions of everyday survival. There was the turmoil of sorrow, guilt, self-reproach, bitterness and shame over the situation the Palestinians found themselves in. At first, the primary orientation was to the past, with the focus on the "Paradise Lost" they had been dispossessed of, and a yearning for "The Return", but little in the way of action. Over a decade after the nakba, this orientation began to alternate with a more future-oriented one, re-establishing Palestinian agency and manifesting in the "Armed Struggle" and the rise of Fatah and the PLO. In characteristic "dual-process" (Stroebe and Schut 1999) style, there is an oscillation between these two orientations over the ensuing years. And, to an extent, they still figure in Palestinian collective consciousness today: a large amount of the visual art described in chapter six has a "Lost Paradise" theme (eg. Halawani's *Presence and Impressions* and *Life through a Lens* photographs, Jabbour's *Palestina* photographs, Shoman's *Bayyaratina* video, Sansour's *Land Confiscation Order* video), while some, if relatively fewer, works suggest the potential for struggle is still there (eg. Batniji's *Gaza Diary* video, Nashashibi's *Post Office District* video, Zurob's *Standby* paintings).

As greater accommodation was made with the realities of their post-nakba world, purposeful Palestinian action moved from the military field to the political one. Arafat made significant concessions (p.141 above), a move which may not have been universally popular with his people but which was seen by many at the time as a realistic step forward towards a future of self-determination in a sovereign Palestinian state. But the history of the various subsequent accords and roadmaps to peace reveals a pattern of one step forward, two steps back as far as the Palestinians were concerned, and their path to collective renewal as a nation has seemed perpetually blocked. This obstruction is confirmed by the prevalence of images of walls, barbed wire, checkpoints, watch towers and concrete blocks in the work of contemporary visual artists (eg. Batniji, Bishara, Halawani, Hatoum, Saadeh, Waked). As a result, some sixty-odd years after their loss, the Palestinian people are still fragmented between the West Bank and Gaza, under Israeli authority and control, in the state of Israel itself, as Arab Israelis, in refugee camps around the neighbouring Arab countries, and in the diaspora.

Progress towards “recovery”, to a normal level of collective functioning in some renewed structure of meaning, appears to have been impeded despite the attempts of the Palestinians to arrive at some level of accommodation with the realities of their situation. They have until relatively recently received little support or sympathy from the international community. Rather, their grief was for a long time disenfranchised (Doka 2002), their “right to grieve” unacknowledged either because, perceived as Arabs who should be happy to live anywhere in the Arab world, their loss was deemed insignificant; or because, given an “orientalist” (Said 1978) view of Arabs as inferior beings, or, even more extreme, a Joan Peters-type Zionist view of the Palestinians as non-existent (pp.114-6 above), they were not considered capable of grief.

Meanwhile, their grief has become incremental (Cook and Oltjenbrun 1998) as the chain of losses sparked off by the original loss of land has grown: loss of the social fabric and access to family and friends; loss of freedom of movement; loss of expectations of normal day-to-day living; loss of dignity; loss of the opportunity for what might be considered a normal childhood; loss of time; loss of aspirations to the sort of national development that other Arab

peoples have enjoyed. The canon of contemporary Palestinian visual arts outlined in chapter six vividly brings home the stark reality of these various losses.

Given this exacerbated and prolonged grieving, and given that the social support recognised as critical to the effective resolution of grief (p.40-1 above) has been conspicuously unforthcoming from the international community, the Palestinian people might well be expected to have developed a pathological response by now, or to have given up altogether and individually faded into the backgrounds of their various new environments. But their collective grief trajectory displays many of the signs associated with “healthy” grieving. They have demonstrated, and continue to demonstrate, a remarkable resilience, the “sumud” which seems to enable them to cope with their grief (p.40-1 above). This attitude of steadfastness and perseverance emanates from Bishara’s cactus pieces, from Fawakhri’s “I am Donkey/ Made in Palestine” images, from Jacir’s “Crossing Surda” film, from Waked’s “Fashion for Israeli Checkpoints” video, and from the general determined persistence of ordinary Palestinians going about their everyday business. In addition, the retention of “continuing bonds” (Goss and Klass 2005; Klass, Silverman and Nickman 1996) with their previous Palestinian identity in the form of keys to the original Palestinian houses, plants from the original Palestinian gardens, and a detailed, intimate knowledge of the original Palestinian village geography, all passed down through the generations, serves to maintain a relationship with their past, with who they once were, that can serve as a foundation for who they are going to become.

It is a tenet of grief theory that who we are informs how we grieve (pp.20-1,81 above), and the Palestinian grieving style, the way in which they have gone about dealing with their loss, reflects aspects of their collective social and cultural location. In terms of Doka and Martin’s (1998) spectrum of grieving styles, the Palestinians might be considered as grieving at the more intuitive and feeling-based end of the scale, given the initial post-nakba passivity, the tendency to lamentation, and the overwhelming expression of injustice and victimisation. This is hardly surprising when the social and cultural resources available to them at the time are taken into consideration.

It is beyond the scope of this study to enter into a discussion of Arab national character, a topic which has given rise to so many sweepingly categorical statements and evaluatively loaded cross-cultural comparisons (Moughrabi 1978). But a non-judgemental reading of Barakat's (1974, cited in Moughrabi, 1978, p.109) description of Arab society as more spontaneous than calculating, more socioemotionally than task oriented, more preoccupied with status than achievement, and more taken up with the past than the future, would certainly indicate a culture which privileges feeling-based values. As Doka and Martin point out, this end of the spectrum tends to be associated in western culture with the female response, as opposed to the more logical and instrumental approach typically correlated with masculinity. As such, it does not represent a mode of reaction likely to garner much sympathy on a world stage regulated according to western, 'masculine' norms of rationality and purposefully-directed agency, particularly during an era when an all-action John Wayne was a role-model.

Moreover, the Palestinians had experienced little opportunity for self-determined action in their history. For centuries, they had been subject to imperial rule by some great power or other, the Mamluks, the Ottomans, the British, and were accustomed to any major decisions affecting their lives being taken by someone else, based elsewhere. In addition, although there was a Christian element to the Palestinian population, largely urban and reckoned at less than 10% during the period of the British mandate (British Government Report to the League of Nations on Palestine and Transjordan, 1937, www.ismi.emory.edu), the vast majority adhered to Islam, a religion based on the concept of submission.

Nothing in the social and cultural background of the Palestinians at the time of the nakba indicated an action-oriented, problem-solving response to their loss. But, as a largely peasant people who had endured the hardships of making a living from the land and who had persisted through centuries of conquests and various imperial masters, they did possess resilience, a quality deemed essential to any effective resolution of grief.

Israel

The history of the European Jews, the holocaust and the creation of Israel presents a very different picture in terms of loss and grief. As discussed in chapter five (pp.156-62 above), world Jewry at the beginning of the twentieth century could scarcely be considered a people in the usual sense of the term, scattered around various parts of the world as minority groups in different countries, with no common territory, language or culture, bound only by religious beliefs, and various traditions and rituals associated with those beliefs. However, the vast majority of world Jewry, which lived in Europe, in particular Eastern Europe, shared, in addition to their religion, a centuries-long history of marginalisation, repression and persecution which had resulted in a perpetual quest for security by means of a variety of strategies.

Given this history, the holocaust cannot be viewed as a one-off event but has to be seen rather as the climax to and culmination of centuries of insecurity and dispossession. Nevertheless, it was so different in scale and scope, as well as in the chilling industrial efficiency of its manner of implementation, that it must still have registered as traumatic, as outside the European Jewish frame of reference up till that point and thus resistant to meaningful interpretation. Earlier pogroms and massacres had been relatively localised; compliance, ingenuity or money had previously proven useful in times of trouble; and, when the worst came to the worst, whole communities had been able to move from one part of Europe to another and start life afresh.

But this time, except for those who had reacted quickly in anticipation of events and left Europe by the late 1930s, there was no way out. Nothing would save them from a policy of annihilation that so completely dehumanised the Jews it essentially amounted to an extermination programme, involving systems and procedures more usually reserved for the treatment of vermin. Not only did the holocaust entail the loss of up to six million Jewish lives, representing more than half of world Jewry and some two thirds of European Jewry at the time, it dispossessed the Jews of any sense of ontological security in its most basic terms: the claim on or expectation of even the barest level of existence as human beings. In

addition, it brought about a loss of trust, both the elementary trust in others on which the operation of society depends, and, since their capacities and abilities had so clearly proved unequal to the task of preventing what had befallen them, the fundamental trust in themselves necessary to the individual and collective self-confidence required for normal functioning in the world.

In the wake of these holocaust-related losses, the collective reaction appears to follow a regular grief pattern. There was the initial period of silence, motivated by feelings of shame and self-reproach to such an extent that it can be considered indicative of a degree of self-disenfranchisement of grief (Kauffman 2002). The full gamut of emotion underlying this silence was only allowed release and expression with the catharsis of the Eichmann trial in the early 1960s. Meanwhile, the State of Israel was being created, not just as a safe haven, a territorial containment to ensure future Jewish security along with a legitimate place in the world of nations, but also as a locus for the renegotiation of Jewish national identity, the refashioning of the collective consciousness so badly damaged by the events of the holocaust. The new muscular Israeli, pioneer, worker and fighter, complete with new homeland, new language and a new history of heroic deeds and sacrifices, was replacing the weak, submissive, exilic, and ultimately doomed, European Jew. This morphing of the European Jewish victim into the Israeli victor was complete with Israel's triumph in the Six Days' War of 1967.

In terms of the spectrum of grieving styles (Doka and Martin 1998), the Jewish/Israeli reaction to the losses of the holocaust is right up at the instrumental, rationally-based and action-oriented end of the scale. Feelings were suppressed for the better part of twenty years, while active problem-solving took priority. The strategies employed were essentially no different from the ones the Jews of Europe had been using for centuries, except enacted on a global rather than a European stage. Those left in Europe after the holocaust moved on, some to North America and some to Palestine. Starting afresh, they set about carving out niches of wealth and influence, both on an individual level in the case of North American immigrants, and on a collective level in the case of the State of Israel. This seemingly logical,

independently-minded move to make sense of their post-holocaust world by standing on their own two feet and sorting out their problems, epitomised in the strong, self-sufficient image of the new Israeli Jew, attracted a great deal of international support, particularly from the west. And however much this support may have been due to factors of self-interest, or even of guilt that the holocaust should have happened on European soil, it has to be said that the Jewish/Israeli grieving style was completely in tune with the rational and action-based 'masculine' values predominant in western society at the time, and, as such, bound to garner western sympathies.

However, as time went on and the State of Israel developed, its population enlarged by the 'ingathering of exiles' from Jewish communities around the world, its relations with the Palestinians and its Arab neighbours engulfing it in endless rounds of conflict, any discernible grief trajectory appears to veer from what might be considered a regular path of progression and displays a consistent failure to accommodate changing realities. The holocaust, rather than gradually fading into the past, became an increasingly central totem of the Jewish State. Yad Vashem, the memorial museum to the holocaust founded in 1953, assumed an increasingly significant role in public life, becoming the mandatory first port-of-call, straight from the airport, for any visiting foreign dignitary of any note. In the national calendar, Holocaust Remembrance Day, established in 1953, was to become the first of the three major commemoration days, falling shortly before Memorial Day and the almost immediately subsequent Independence Day, the clear message being that military sacrifice redeemed the holocaust and enabled the creation of the state. More recently, an official programme of school trips has been set up for Israeli teenagers, a year or two away from leaving school and undertaking their military service, to the sites of the extermination camps in Poland in order to better appreciate what happened there (Feldman 2008).

Although not directly relevant to the experience of those non-European Jews soon to form the majority of the Israeli population, the holocaust has been retained in the memory of the state as emblematic of what can happen if Jews allow themselves to become vulnerable. It has been used as a means of holding a disparate nation together through fear of vulnerability,

underscoring the need for security through constant vigilance and assertive self-defence. History reveals an oscillation within Israeli society between a clinging to these old fears and an accommodation of new realities, with Rabin's policies, for example, tending towards the latter. Fear, however, seems to unfailingly win out, as demonstrated by the building of the security wall, the lock-down on Gaza, and the disproportionate responses to provocation from the West Bank, Gaza or South Lebanon.

In grief theory terms, this behaviour, based on the circumstances of a former assumptive world, would be considered maladaptive (Rando 1993). It brings to mind Freud's (1917/1961) original description of melancholia, or grief gone wrong, in its attachment to the void left by loss (Leader 2008) and in its projective identification in terms of the old, weak European Jew (Klein 1940, 1946). Moreover, it displays all the signs of trauma (Jacobs 1999; Mitchell and Everly 2001; Raphael and Martinek 1997): the predominance of fear over sorrow in relation to the role of the holocaust in the national memory; the obsession with the event itself and the scene of its happening, evident in Yad Vashem and in the school trips to Poland; the replaying of the original traumatic event (Van der Veer 1998) in intergenerational terms, with an emotional appreciation of the events of the holocaust being the stated aim of the school trips to Poland; the setting apart from society of the trauma sufferer as a result of loss of trust (Freyd 1996), seen in Israel's relative isolation and literal walling in of itself; and the experience of living in a "dissociated traumatic present" (Fierke 2006), where current challenges are seen in terms of past situations and met on the basis of outdated assumptions and attitudes.

There is no resilience to grief (p.40 above) here, but rather a defensiveness against further loss, demonstrated in the heightened sensitivity to perceived insult or provocation, the excessive retaliation, and, certainly since the Yom Kippur War, the apparent lack of confidence in or incredulity as regards their own strength and capability to defend themselves. Concurrent stressors (p.41 above), in the form of building a nation from scratch and dealing with a largely hostile Arab environment, may have served as inhibitors of Israel's progress in coming to some accommodation with changed realities. But even

the availability of a high level of social support (pp.40-1 above), in the form of the backing of powerful international friends and allies, first Britain, then America, does not seem to have helped, although, to be fair, such patronage may often have been motivated more by self-interest than by any concern for Israel's.

What the Israeli contemporary visual arts seem to be presenting is a challenge to this status quo in the form of an alternative viewpoint fixed firmly on present-day issues. Chapter six describes in some detail a canon of early twenty-first century work that centres on dissatisfaction with a militarised society that puts its younger generation at mortal risk and with an unfair society marked by racism, discrimination and economic inequities. This work exudes a profound disillusionment with what Israel has become, especially by contrast to its founding vision of security and equality for all Jews. Nor does it offer any prospect, bar doomsday scenarios, escapist fantasy or metaphysical philosophising, of a way forward out of Israel's current dilemma. What is being grieved here is the loss of the dream that was Israel, the vision that was once seen as a way of reconstructing European Jewish collective identity in the post-holocaust world.

Given the above evidence from both historical and visual arts sources, two major points can be made. If post-holocaust Jewish/Israeli history presents the contours of a grief trajectory, then it is very much a case of 'complicated' grieving or grief gone wrong. For what can be discerned is not so much a process of accommodation with a post-loss world, but rather a failure to adjust, resulting in a persistent experience of loss, a permanent state of dispossession not dissimilar to that which characterised the centuries-long history of the Jews in Europe. Equally, the evidence points to a degree of contention in society over this state of affairs. The contemporary visual arts highlight the problems of Israel's here and now, focussing on the need to see the realities of the current situation. The grief of the European Ashkenazim who founded Israel, but now represent a minority in its population, has been used to galvanise a disparate population, formed by the 'ingathering of the exiles' from non-European backgrounds over several decades, into a collective unity: the state has consistently used the holocaust to try to bind its

population together as a nation through a common fear of vulnerability. But Israel's contemporary visual artists would appear to be saying there is a need for some negotiation here, that the loss in current Israeli terms represented in their work merits as much attention as the essentially European Jewish loss of the past allocated pole position in Israeli collective consciousness. Their work reflects a tension in Israeli society between a clinging to that past and a desire to move on with the future on the basis of a realistic appreciation of the present, the very tension which lies at the heart of the grief experience.

Do Nations Grieve?

On the basis of the two case studies above, the answer to the question of whether nations grieve has to be in the affirmative, but it is a tentative, it-looks-like-it type of yes, rather than an absolute and categorical one based on unambiguously clear evidence. The case of the Palestinian people seems convincingly straightforward: their history presents the distinct contours of a collective grief trajectory, and their contemporary visual arts demonstrate to what extent the fundamental elements of that grieving experience have impacted on current collective identity. The influence of their social and cultural background within the global community on their approach to accommodating the losses of the nakba is clearly visible in their grief reactions, and the part played by various powerful members of the international community in attempting to regulate those reactions by essentially disenfranchising Palestinian grief is equally evident. Despite their continued fragmentation as a people from the shattering of their world in 1948 to this day, their grief appears in many ways to have made them even stronger and bound them more closely in nationhood.

The case of the European Jews, the holocaust and Israel, although it fits the pattern of the grief trajectory, is far less straightforward. In the first place, the Jews of the early twentieth century were a people without common territory or culture, and, although common faith, conviction and ritual, along with a shared experience of being 'othered' in society, may qualify as features capable of informing collective identity in an 'imagined community' (Anderson

1991) whose members are widely distributed in physical terms, it is arguable whether they can be regarded as sufficient basis for the formation and development of a fully operational collective consciousness. Consideration has to be given, however, to the shared experience of the holocaust itself as inspiring the latter by imbuing a to some extent latent collectivity with the energy necessary to its manifest unfolding and effective functioning.

Secondly, the loss suffered by the Jews of Europe was not so much an event as a long-term condition, the holocaust marking the climax and culmination of centuries of dispossession rather than being a one-off occurrence. Nevertheless, although dispossession may have been a feature of everyday existence for the Jews of Europe, the holocaust was still so significantly different in scale, scope and style from what had gone before that it can feasibly be understood as outwith their frame of reference, hence registering as traumatic loss.

Thirdly, the European Ashkenazi Jews whose post-holocaust grief gave rise to the founding of the State of Israel ultimately became a minority in its population, their grieving experience having no direct personal relevance for the non-European majority. This does not in any way, however, diminish the authenticity of Israel's ongoing national grief trajectory, since the Ashkenazim remained a powerful and influential group whose control of state policy and conduct would have ensured that their collective grief coloured the overall national stance and attitudes. Moreover, this transference of grief from the European minority to the non-European majority, and from one generation to the next, need not be written off solely as cynical political manoeuvring, but could just as conceivably have taken place on a less than conscious level. After all, the ability to see the world from any perspective other than one's own, a challenge for most of humanity at the best of times, is acknowledged as particularly difficult for those whose energies are wholly taken up with grieving.

And fourthly, the Israeli contemporary visual arts as surveyed in chapter six, in their preoccupation with loss and highlighting of disappointment and disillusionment with a society that has turned out differently to the way in

which it was originally envisaged, might seem to indicate a continuing cycle of persistent loss, similar to that of the history of the Jews in Europe. But the fact that this work represents current issues of collective loss in a context of challenge to the dominant holocaust-related focus of Israeli society reflects the central dynamic of the normal grief experience, the tension between holding on to the past and moving on into a future determined on the basis of a realistic appraisal of the present.

Thus, despite the very complex picture presented by the history of the European Jews, the holocaust and Israel, a grief trajectory is discernible. The climax of loss in the holocaust, the emotional response, the drive to make some sense of the post-holocaust Jewish world by recreating Jewish identity in the form of the new Israeli, equipped with new homeland and new useable heroic past, the very antithesis of the weak, submissive European Jew, all correspond to the fundamental elements of the grieving experience. But this grief is complicated grief, seemingly not quite able to leave the old, fearful, assumptive world of the European Jew behind and progress towards a level of normalisation in the community of nations. The complication may be down to the traumatic nature of the loss, ultimately dispossessing the Jews of Europe of the right to exist; to the concurrent stressors of trying to build a nation and defend its people while simultaneously coping with grief; to an international order which did little to exert checks and balances on Israel's grieving experience, but exploited and manipulated it out of self-interest; to an innate defensiveness, born of centuries of marginalisation, that prevented the openness to future possibility that any effective resolution of grief requires; or to a mixture of any or all of these factors.

To add to the complexity, while this complicated European Jewish grief experience has been influencing ongoing official Israeli policy and behaviour, the diverse, largely non-European Israeli nation has been simultaneously attempting to establish the architecture of its own collective consciousness and engaging in intense negotiation over its collective identity. And this nation, to judge from the messages of the contemporary visual art works surveyed in chapter six, might well be on the brink of its own national grief trajectory, triggered by the loss of the founding dream of Israel.

Limitations, Innovations, Further Research Suggestions

The fact that of only two case studies used for this research one can be considered unusual and highly complex, might be perceived as a limitation. However, it can equally be viewed as adding depth and richness to the study. Certainly the cases of Israel and Palestine, although based in the same region of the world and intricately interconnected to the extent that both peoples seem locked in an almost symbiotic embrace, feeding off each other's grief, are significantly different. One involves an Arab, the other a European background. One involves a territorially-based people, the other a territorially-scattered community of faith. One's predicament has been largely ignored by the global community, while the other's has received a great deal of support from international powers. There appears to be sufficient variation in the two cases selected to compensate for the paucity in number.

Similarly, variation has been a major criterion in selection of the secondary data sources for the histories in both case studies, so as to achieve as wide a range of perspectives as possible on the relevant events, behaviours and motivations. The appended references to this dissertation bear witness to the spread, in both chronological and political terms, of the sources utilised for each study. With regard to the primary sources employed to furnish data on current national identities, the contemporary visual arts may not seem an immediately obvious choice, but in these particular contexts, where the political situation is an unavoidable factor of everyday life, and artists ipso facto use their art to make political comment, they work well as indicators of the central issues around which national identity is currently being negotiated. Any charge that artists tend to derive from a particularly oriented segment of society, mainly highly-educated and inclining towards the liberal left, springs from a distinctly western perspective on art and artists which is not necessarily universally applicable. Moreover, no focus group or set of interviewees could easily or practicably be assembled for research purposes that would even begin to cover the range of backgrounds, orientations and provenances represented by the artists whose work is described in chapter six above.

Since the use of the visual arts in a study of this nature, though relatively innovative, has proved effective in revealing societal issues and processes, a plea is perhaps warranted for sociologists and social historians to take them into more serious consideration as research data sources. Chapter three (pp.96-100) outlines the arguments for the social nature of artistic production, with the artist as a participant in the social construction of reality and the work of art as a site where collective values can be negotiated and critical consciousness developed. Moreover, the particular significance of the visual arts lies in their capacity for cutting through the stale perceptual habits and ingrained routine cognitive associations of language to permit a more direct apprehension, a more immediate grasp of the idea that is being given form.

These many benefits should commend the use of the visual arts in social research, although a warning note has to be sounded that problems of interpretation can often serve to render them almost inaccessible to the researcher. My own experience during this research exercise was that many art critics and commentators use such obfuscatory, dense and abstract language when discussing or describing works of art that they can actually impede rather than enable understanding. The artists themselves in talking or writing about their work are often remarkably clear on the intentions of their artistically-formed messages, but equally likely to purposefully leave interpretation open to the viewers.

Finally, whatever sources are employed to provide data on current social realities, there is clearly a need for further research on national grief trajectories through examination of the histories and current collective identities of nations or peoples which can be deemed to have undergone significant loss two or three generations ago. The latter half of the twentieth century can supply an *embarras de richesses* in terms of research subjects which fit this particular bill: partition in the Indian sub-continent and in Cyprus; genocide in the Cambodian civil war, in the Bangladesh liberation war and in Ethiopia's Red Terror; a plethora of civil wars in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. And that is before even taking into consideration for future investigation later events like the genocides in Rwanda and the Balkans, or the invasions

and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq that have not yet had time to impact beyond a first generation.

It might be particularly interesting, however, having traced two national grief trajectories, one essentially European, one Arab, from a background of the Abrahamic religions, to look at national grief against an entirely different cultural background with a different perspective on loss. Turning to the Buddhist world, Tibet, in the wake of its military defeat by and loss of sovereignty to China in 1950; and Cambodia, reacting to the heinous atrocities of its civil war of the early 1970s, would be good candidates. In addition, further to tracing the overall grief trajectories and the contours of grief apparent in current national identity, more detailed research might usefully be conducted in areas like the various mechanisms whereby grief is transferred from one generation to the next in different national settings; or the repertoire of strategies employed by different grieving nations for making sense of their post-loss world and reconstructing national identity; or the role and indicators of emotion at a collective level in the national grieving experience. The possibilities are many and varied: if the study of individual grief could take a century to develop through several refinements of both psychologically and sociologically-based theory and numerous practical research projects, then the study of large-scale collective grief may well have some way to go.

Nations

The studies of Palestine and Israel from a grief theory perspective serve to highlight several noteworthy points about nations.

Territoriality

Firstly, they underline the importance of territoriality. In chapter two above (pp.64-9), reference was made to the ubiquity of Anderson's "imagined community" concept (1991) in current academic discussion of the nation and

to similar theories positing a deterritorialised 'post-national' world of the future. However, an appreciation of the historic grief trajectories of both the Palestinians and the European Jews, subsequently Israelis, lends support to Grosby's view (1995) of territory providing more than mere physical space to live in, but a vital structure of meaning and memory for the people who inhabit it, a framework of bounded containment necessary to the functioning of collective life and experience (pp.68-9 above).

The extent and endurance of Palestinian grief over the loss of their territory indicates its significance to their sense, at both a collective and an individual level, of who they are. For more than sixty years, the Palestinians have tenaciously retained their relationship with their land, their visual art reflecting the close integration, the near indivisibility of land and people (pp.208-12 above). This is clearly easier for that section of the population that has remained in one way or another, as Arab Israelis or as West Bank or Gaza Palestinians, on their territory. But equally, in the refugee camps in other Arab countries there has been the intergenerational transfer of intimate geographical detail of the original Palestinian villages and landscapes along with physical plants from the original Palestinian gardens; and in the diaspora artists like Halaby and Jabbour, who have long been living away from the land of their origins, still display a strong connection with it in their work. The blood-and-soil connection between land and people seems to have strengthened Palestinian resilience, imbuing them collectively with a terra-firma-type stability, the capacity to persevere and weather difficulties.

Meanwhile, world Jewry until the mid-twentieth century, if considered a community at all, any communal status resting largely on shared religious belief, tradition and ritual, has to be regarded as a deterritorialised one, the Jews existing as minority groups within a variety of largely European host nations. The twentieth century European Jewish drive for security and normalisation within the world order, motivated by their history of marginalisation and persecution in Europe, was defined in terms of acquisition of territory, and aimed at the Jews becoming a territorialised people. And the physical space that they acquired for this purpose, the land of Israel, swiftly had all the normal territorial attributes of collective memory

and meaning, the language, culture, myth and history normally developed over centuries, tacked on to it. But what the contemporary visual arts surveyed in chapter six demonstrate is a disappointment and disillusionment resulting from this exercise: they depict a lack of harmony in the relationship between the Israeli people and the territory they inhabit (pp.217-25 above). The question the artists appear to be posing is whether territoriality, as a fundamental, constitutive element of society, can be created either artificially or overnight.

The International Community

What comes out very clearly from the two case studies is the influence of the international community on the grieving experience of any particular nation, much in the same way as society impacts on any individual's grief. Interconnectedness has its effects at both levels. The grief of the Palestinian people was essentially disenfranchised for decades in that their territorial loss was not fully acknowledged on the world scene: it suited the global powers of the time to regard them as Arabs who could make a home for themselves anywhere in Greater Syria and to refuse to see any real problem involved in their moving on to give the Jews some space. This initial and basic disenfranchisement coloured the entire subsequent grief trajectory for the Palestinians. At first, they had no voice, until, through violence, they forced the world to pay some heed. Later, during the course of the various peace processes, they made sizeable concessions which were never fully appreciated or even recognised by Israel and the West because the foundations on which each side's perspectives, viewpoints and approaches depended, differed in this one crucial respect: the Palestinians had experienced a hugely damaging loss in 1948, but the influential western powers on the world stage simply did not recognise this as a fact.

The Jews of Europe, meanwhile, undergoing their own grieving experience in the wake of the holocaust, made sense of their post-holocaust world by constructing their safe haven on someone else's territory, with the full support and encouragement of the western powers, almost as a last cheer for

European colonialism. This stance might seem understandable in the light of the attitudes, knowledge and perspectives of the period when Israel was founded. But the essentially unconditional support, particularly as provided by the US during its era of sole global superpower status, continued even when understandings of and standpoints on the situation had changed and Israel was increasingly perceived around the world as an aggressor. The Jewish State, it seemed, could defy international opinion and flaunt United Nations resolutions with impunity as long as it had the support of its powerful American friend and ally. Ultimately, however, this support, lacking in checks and balances, would do Israel no favours, serving not so much to shield it from but to blind it to any recognition of the realities to which it needed to adjust if normalisation was to be achieved.

Essentially, both case studies point up the ways in which national grief has been exploited in the self-interests of powerful forces on the international scene: long-term refusal to acknowledge legitimate loss in the case of Palestine; blind support of a runaway and fundamentally self-destructive course of grief gone wrong in the case of Israel; and the calculated manipulation of both by opposing sides during the Cold War. There is no evidence at an international level of either long-term thinking about or responsibility taken for the consequences of inflicting loss, or allowing it to be inflicted, upon particular members of the global community, nor for how a grieving nation might be supported in a genuinely helpful and non-exploitative manner to recover from such loss. The thought, care, compassion and support lavished on the grieving individual in society, in terms of both research and practice, appear to be signally lacking at the international level.

National Identity

National identity emerges from the case studies as a feature subject to change and evolution, particularly with regard to its order of salience amongst multiple identities held by the individual and to its relative degree of passivity or agency (pp.50-1 above). With reference to Melucci's (1989, p.34) definition of collective identity as process rather than property, it is interesting

to note how this process engages with grief in both cases. For the Palestinians, the sense of being Palestinian or coming from Palestine appears to have been of a fairly low order of salience amongst their various multiple overlapping identities until disaster struck in 1948, their subsequent territorial dispossession shifting it to a more prominent position. A strong correspondence between this national identity, affected by the shared loss of land in the nakba, and personal identity, affected by all or any of a variety of related losses, of home, family, livelihood, and so on, would have served to reinforce its prominence. Promoted in the salience order of multiple identities, and strengthened by its convergence with personal identity, the sense of being Palestinian became, perhaps for the first time, a primary self-identification, with intrinsic common goals and the quality of self-direction characteristic of collective identity. Grief can thus be seen as infusing an apparently passive national identity with the energy necessary to activating collective agency. Certainly, if there was ever any question of the Palestinians being regarded as a nation before 1948, there has been little doubt of the strength of their collective self-perception since.

In the case of the European Jews, with a history of keeping a low profile in order to survive, their identity as Jews was given increasing prominence during the Nazi era. This primary positioning of Jewishness in their salience order of identification would have been to some extent self-imposed, particularly in cases of communities where segregation had been a matter of choice. But for many, especially those who had chosen assimilation, it would have been imposed by the society they lived in and not by the Jews themselves. At that point in time, given the universes of difference between the lives and backgrounds of Jews from different parts of Europe, Jewishness could not perhaps be regarded as an overarching collective identity, with the agency that implies, but rather a social one, an externally attributed, and to varying degrees internally accepted, marker of identification. It certainly seemed to take the full horror of the holocaust, and the subsequent correspondence between collective Jewish loss and the associated large-scale personal losses of individual Jews, to galvanise a

collective identity, the intrinsic “we-ness” of that identity centred on and developed in Israel as part of the post-holocaust grief process.

National identity can thus be seen from these cases as covering a spectrum from externally imposed and internally accepted marker of identification to enthusiastically embraced self-identification. At the latter end of the scale, it is a collective identity which is more fluid process than fixed attribute, its inherent potential for self-directed agency triggered by the threat inherent in shared loss, which promotes it in the salience order of the multiple identities held by the individual while simultaneously creating a powerfully binding convergence between personal and national identities.

Grief

Equally, the application of grief theory to large-scale national groupings raises some important points about grief.

Agency

In both case studies, responsibility for the respective collective losses is attributed to another group: for the European Jews, the Nazis were the culprits; for the Palestinians it was the Jews, subsequently the Israelis. Other groups came in for a share of blame, largely as a result of their support for or inability to foresee or prevent the actions of the perpetrators, but overall causative responsibility for loss and suffering was squarely pinned on one distinct group in each case. As discussed in chapter two above (pp.72-3), this factor of human agency would seem to be a characteristic of grief at a national level, where the loss and suffering resulting from natural catastrophe does not seem to pose the same threat (Van der Veer 1998; Zinner and Williams 1999). Natural disaster, of course, does not directly affect a whole nation, rather certain localised communities within it. Moreover, national identity is essentially a social marker, differentiating one group from another, and there is no social contract with nature to be broken or betrayed, no

assumptions or expectations that it should behave with respect or consideration for human beings.

At the level of the individual, grief is triggered by bereavement through death by natural causes, by dislocation as a result of natural disasters, by loss of physical capacity as a natural result of ageing, or by loss of an occupational role at a default retirement age, just as much if not more than equivalent losses brought about by direct human intervention. But it appears to make no fundamental difference whether human agency is involved in the loss which triggers grief or not. Despite the statement in the opening lines of Victim Support's report on the needs of people bereaved by homicide (2006) that "The traumatic grief that follows homicide is unlike the grief that accompanies a death by natural causes", an examination of descriptions of such grief (Acker and Karp 2006; Harris 2001; King 2004; Schlosser 1997) indicates only a difference in degree or intensity rather than nature. The grieving experiences of relatives of murder victims tend to register a more traumatic loss and to run a more complicated course as a result of several factors: the suddenness of the death; the pressures of grieving while in the public spotlight of media and courts; the stresses imposed by having to deal with the legal system; the attitudes of society, with reference to a certain glamorisation of killers in the entertainment media, or as related to the specific nature of the case; and a perceived lack of closure, with regard to unmet needs for information or for justice, and particularly where no perpetrator is ever identified.

Moreover, when cases of bereavement through death from natural causes are taken into consideration, it is a generally acknowledged facet of human nature to want to attribute blame. The doctors, the hospital staff, the government, god, the deceased person himself, can all be variously held responsible, with self-reproach also figuring large in descriptions of the grieving experience.

Such scapegoating, the casting around for some agentive force to which responsibility for suffering can be attributed, appears to be a common feature of significant loss, a tendency which betokens a somewhat simplistic and

superficial view of happenings in the world as governed by straightforward rules of cause and effect. A more sophisticated slant on agency as located in the interinvolvement of humans and multiple non-human actants (Bennett 2010) would be less quick in apportioning blame to specific human agents. And yet another perspective, which would remove the notion of agency in these terms altogether from our understanding of worldly events and phenomena, seeing them as arising from an acausal connecting principle based on attraction or synchronicity (Jung 1972), would view the roles typically designated victim and perpetrator in any loss scenario, whether collective or individual, as bearing joint responsibility for both the occurrence and outcome of their interaction.

Shame

One emotion which does not figure large in the grief theory literature, yet which stands out in both the Palestinian and European Jewish/Israeli narratives, is shame. The whole conceptualisation and development of Israel, with the new muscular Hebrew and his history of heroism and sacrifice in counterpoint to the old, weak, persecuted and compliant European Jew, can be seen as an exercise in erasing the shame of the “savonettes” who went “like lambs to the slaughter” in a series of events which brought centuries of oppression and persecution to a climax. For the Palestinians, the sense of honour which is such a central value of Arab society was bound up with possession of land and defence of kin, and the shame and humiliation they experienced after the nakba stemmed from their loss of the former and evident inability to fulfil the latter (pp.126-7 above). The PLO later used this shame as a motivator for encouraging collective military action.

The fact that shame does not seriously feature in accounts of individual grieving, but is so clearly crucial to at least these two narratives of large-scale collective grief bears further examination. Arab society sets a higher value on honour than modern western society, but the centrality of shame to the Jewish post-holocaust experience would seem to indicate that this is not just a cultural factor. Nor would it seem justifiable to assume that pride and

shame function more strongly as aspects of collective than of personal identity. Does the collective shame in the two case studies perhaps stem from a negative self-evaluation resulting from dispossession and consequent diminishment at the hands of others in the course of inter-group interaction (pp.73-4 above), i.e. the European Jews with the Nazis and the Palestinians with Israel? But the concept of agency in association with loss and grief, as discussed in the preceding section, would appear to be less straightforward than such an analysis permits. Perhaps the whole notion of shame, although an unfamiliar direction for the late twentieth century western moral compass, deserves consideration at both the collective and individual level as a possible indicator of diminished self-evaluation consequent on significant loss in general.

Kauffman (2010, p.3) observes that “There is broad sociocultural support in the belief that shame is not central to grief”. However, where the nature of the death being grieved or the manner of grieving itself warrants, or even hints at, social disenfranchisement of the grief for any reason (Doka 2002), the operation of shame, functioning as an indicator of compliance with society’s norms, is acknowledged. Thus the potential for shame is recognised in those bereavement situations which the griever perceives as humiliating (Parkes 1972, p.34) and involving social stigma. It features prominently in studies of bereavement through suicide (Harwood et al. 2002; Hawton and Simkin 2003), or through AIDS (Allen 2009; Balk and Corr 2009, pp. 104-6; Nzioka 2000), and also shows up in grief surrounding homicide victims (Schlosser 1997) and perinatal death (Barr 2004). It likewise marks the griever’s questioning of his own reactions to loss and their appropriacy in the light of accepted social norms: for example, a woman’s shame over expressing her overwhelming sorrow at the death of a much-loved pet in a society that reserves such depth of feeling for human death; or a man’s shame over his perceived unmanliness in expressing or even feeling grief at any great depth or for any protracted period.

Kauffman (2010) underlines to what extent these aspects of grief can serve to isolate the griever from society, and how this “disconnective nature of grief is shameful” (p.3). He thus recognises the important role of shame in the

grieving experience, but by characterising it as pervasive, diverse and many-faced in nature and by focussing primarily on social disconnection, he appears to miss the point of its absolute centrality. In the case studies of Palestine and Israel, shame appears on cue right after the period of bewildered disorientation immediately following the loss, and prior to the attempts to make sense of the post-loss world, essentially informing these efforts at reconstruction of the collective identity. This is a critical point in the grief trajectory, when the dispossession involved in loss is apprehended as diminishment and devaluation, as a lessening or weakening of the socially constructed self which is perceived in terms of threat to that self's intactness and integrity. And, in the interests of self-preservation, the apparent threat needs to be addressed (Dickerson et al. 2004; Gruenewald et al. 2004). Shame, as "the focal emotion experienced under conditions of threat to the social self" (Gruenewald et al. 2007, p. 69), might therefore be considered pivotal to the grief experience, serving to alert the self to the threat posed by loss and to the need to do something about it.

Certainly, at the national level, there would appear to be some evidence for shame's pivotal position in the collective grief experience to be drawn from the case studies in focus in this piece of research. At the individual level, however, such evidence, bar in those specific cases centring on social disenfranchisement as referenced above, would seem to be signally lacking. This fact might indicate a difference in the way shame operates in the grief trajectory between the two levels, or it might simply support Lewis's (1971) argument that because of the shame surrounding shame, it remains largely hidden.

Change

This study emphasises the fact that grief, at the individual and the group level, is about change and how people, both alone and together, cope with it. Why the changes involved for an individual suffering bereavement through death should ever have been singled out as some kind of anomaly in human experience (Wierzbicka 2004, p. 582), perhaps says more about twentieth

century western attitudes towards death than about grief itself. And while almost a century's worth of grief theory and research have served to make finer and finer distinctions between individual experiences of grief with their various findings on complicated grief, traumatic grief, and post traumatic stress disorder, a more recent trend (pp.18-9 above), which this particular study follows, has worked at extending the applicability of grief to a wider range of contexts than the traditional bereavement.

The far-reaching relevance of grief would seem to indicate a quality of universality, an experience intrinsic to the human condition. And perhaps this is because grief centres on identity. Change is welcome if it is perceived as bringing about a set of circumstances that will enhance our self-identity, our conception of who we think we are. It is unwelcome when it seems to strip us of elements of our self-image that we had hitherto taken for granted and in so doing damages that image, posing a threat to the integrity of the self we purport to be. The two cases on which this study centres demonstrate how collective grief comes into play where membership of a group is considered to be an important defining element of identity.

Identity is a cobbled-together affair, dependent on an endless collection of props, both shared and personal, but all inherently social in nature. The protection and preservation of this essentially fluid and makeshift self-image and the maintenance of its continuity would seem to be at the heart of grief, implying an assumption that permanence of identity is essential to any sense of stability or security. Whether such an assumption is either well-founded or wise in a world which is so clearly organised on principles of change and impermanence is a question more perhaps for philosophers and Buddhists than for this study to answer.

But perhaps a final word on the issue might come from two artists who address it directly in their work, a Jew and an Arab who both come from Israel, a part of the world where the insistence on and the claims of identity have created such a turmoil of conflict and confusion. Michal Rovner's "Time Left" and "Data Zone", detailed in chapter six (pp. 216, 262), present human figures stripped of all identity and specificity, in an almost abstract, generic

and emblematic form. In her BBC Radio Three interview with John Tusa about her exhibition at the 2003 Venice Biennale, she explains that her whole technical approach of re-photographing and re-mastering images until she has produced such figures is essentially “a strategy of removing something away from its identity, its locality or specificity”. Viewing one of her “Data Zone” culture plates for any length of time, with the tiny dark figures cutting across each other, forming interlocking circles, contracting into small clusters or bursting out and scattering across the white background, as if engaged in some elegant but enigmatic dance, emulates “the gaze of an ancient, indifferent deity” (Skene 2009). The piece might have been made to illustrate the Buddha’s words “To watch the birth and death of beings is like looking at the movements of a dance” (cited in Rinpoche 2002, p.25).

Asad Azi is an Arab Israeli and a member of the Druze community, a minority group within the underprivileged Arab minority of the Jewish State. His work is characterised by a cultural hybridity or eclecticism, incorporating motifs from and references to a variety of sources, both oriental and occidental, both high and low in artistic terms. His major focus is the issue of identity, and although this might seem a natural corollary of his relatively liminal status within Israel, Ankori (2006, pp.178-96) argues that his work reflects an oscillation between biography and ontology and a conscious choice on the part of the artist to try to free himself from the sort of categories of identity that divide people. His “Self-portrait” (1997) comprises a large canvas of fifteen black and white portraits of the artist, in varying resolutions, each of his fifteen selves identified by an externally imposed sign of identity. These include the various combinations of numbers or letters society has allocated to him in the form of ID card number, date of birth, telephone number, car licence plate number and so on, and various names, in Arabic and English, by which he is known. A more recent work, “Wanderer (Good Day, Mr Azi)” (2003), is another self-portrait, but this time of the artist as a naked nomad carrying his few bundled possessions on a stick over his shoulder, a man not so much bereft of but free from any specific ethnic, cultural or social attributes.

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